Morning

モーニング KC99

不思議な少年

山下和美

講談社

a Wonder Boy

3

「不思議な少年」

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9 リチャード・ウイルソン卿とグラハム・ベッカー

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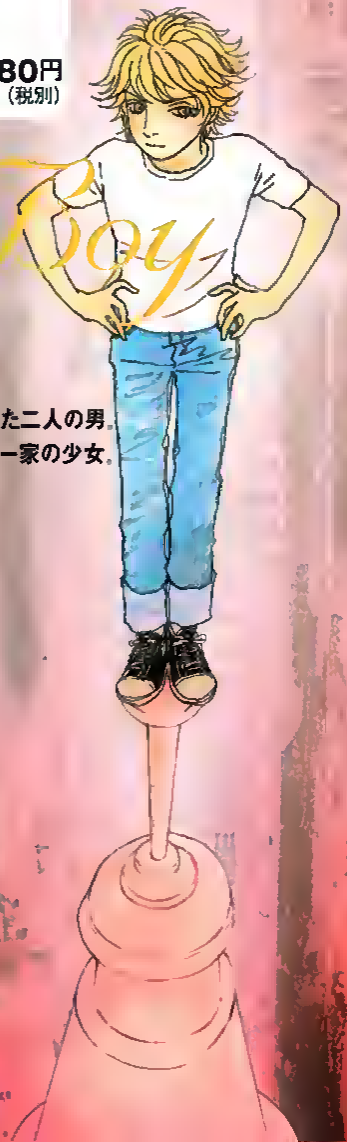

a Wonder Boy

人間て不思議だ。

変わらない日常に、感覚が麻痺した現代のサラリーマン一家。
誰もが未踏の地に憧れた、探検家の活躍著しい時代に南極で遭難した二人の男。
今から約100年ほどの昔――、時代の変わり目を生きた、貴族エッシャー家の少女。

あらゆる時、あらゆる場所で、人間が放つ感情。
永遠の命を持った美しき少年は、その感情の行く末を見つめ続ける。
見据える先にはいつも、「人間」に秘められた真実があった。
「天才 柳沢教授の生活」の山下和美が、人間の光と闇おりなす
複雑な綾を描き出すシリーズ、第3巻!

Kazumi Yamashita

3

a Wonder Boy

不思議な少年 3

山下和美

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不思議な少年 3

a Wonder Boy

山下和美

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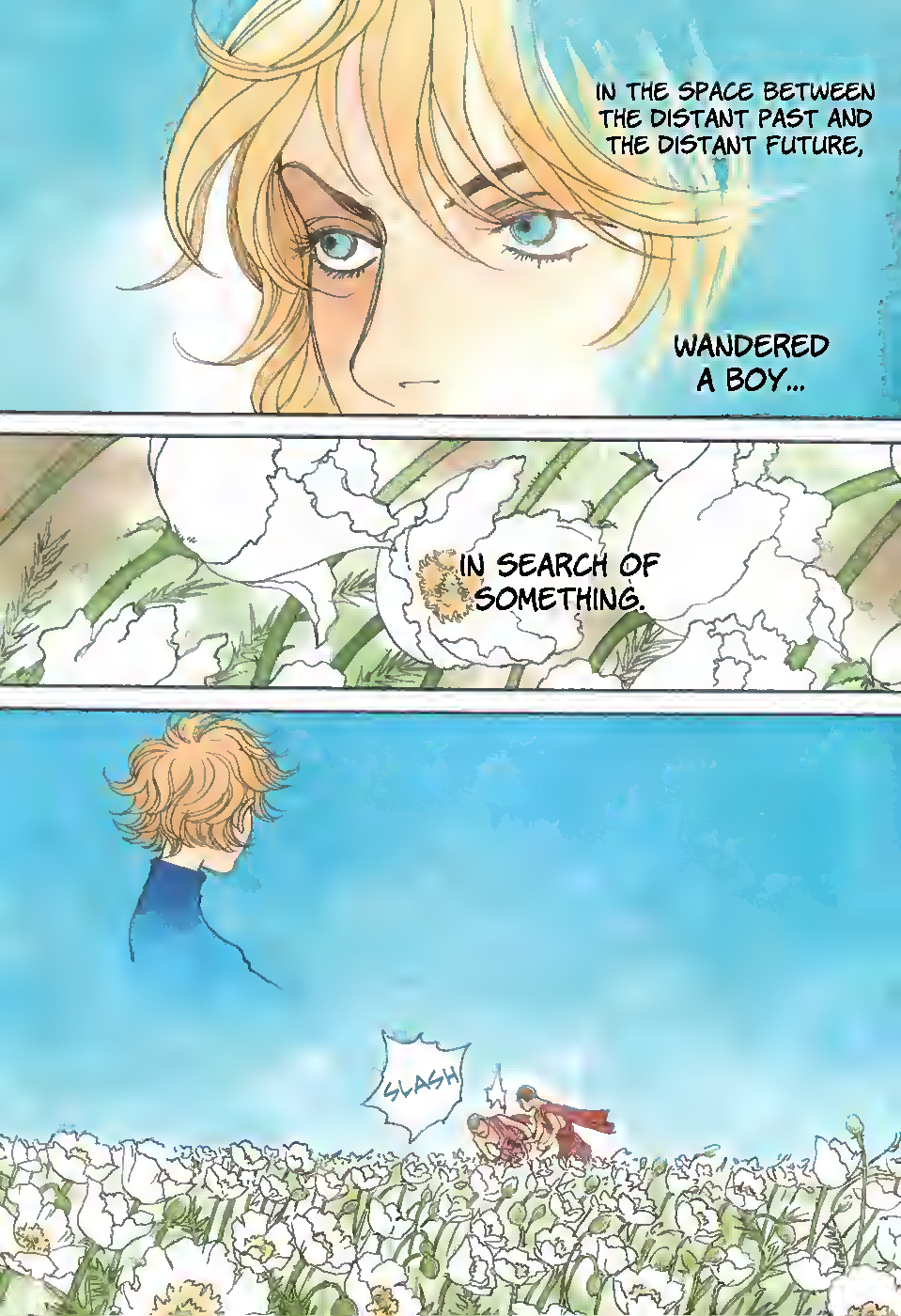
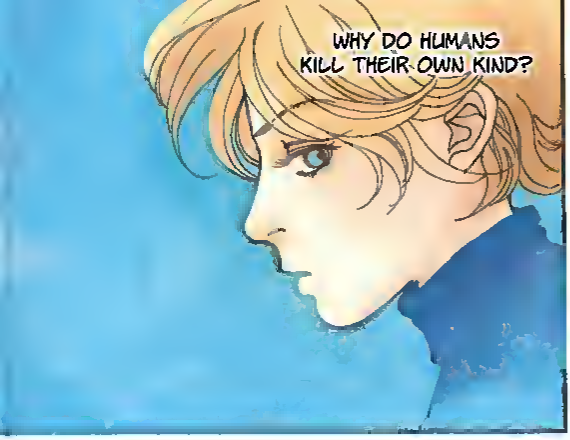
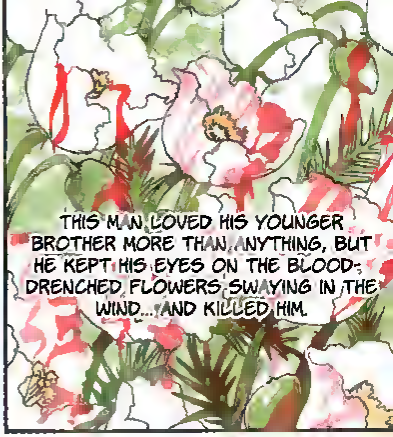
遠い未来のどこか
不思議な少年
そっと心と
何かを
つめました
山下和美

3 年生の漢字

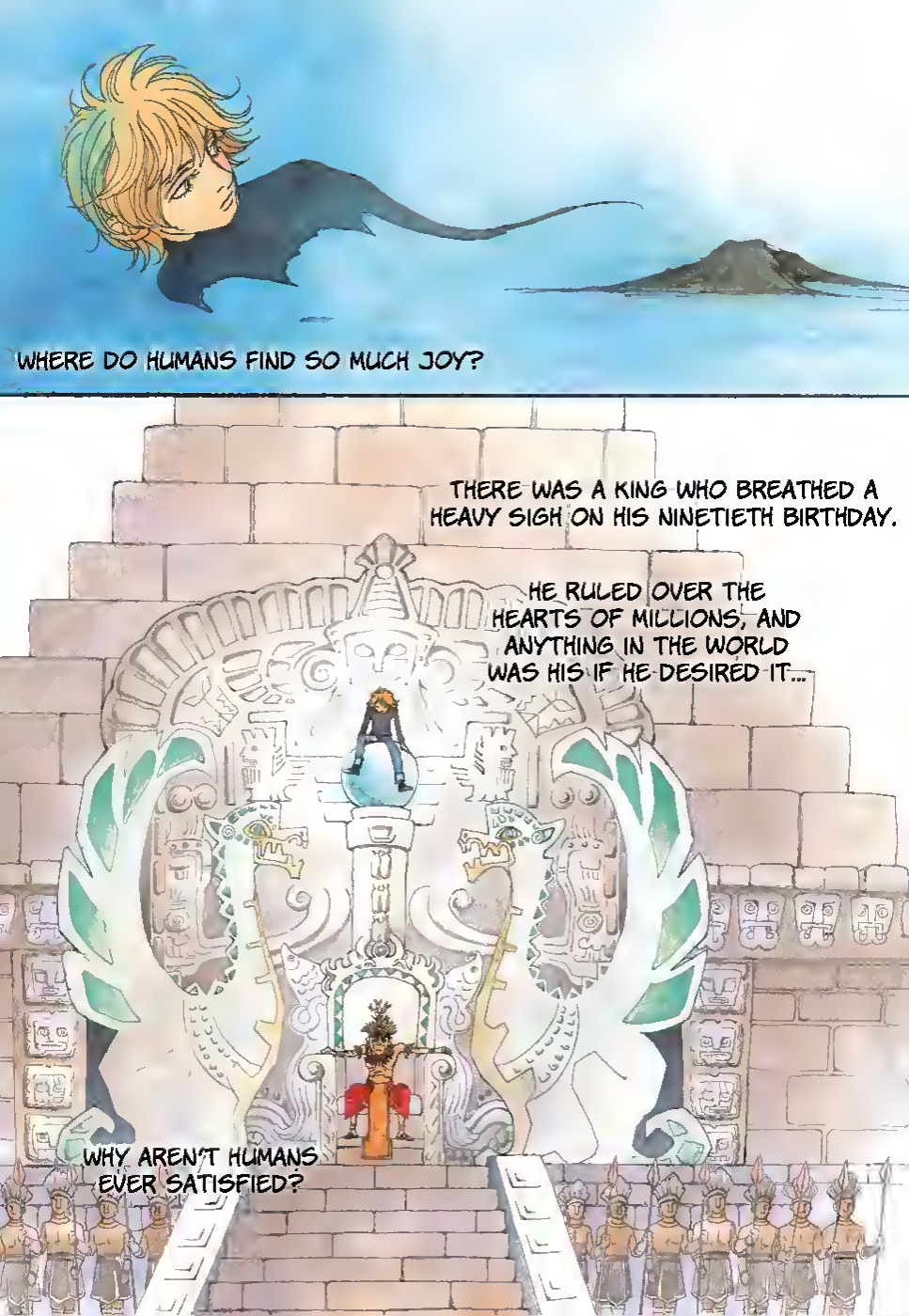

IN THE SPACE BETWEEN THE DISTANT PAST AND THE DISTANT FUTURE,
WANDERED A BOY...
IN SEARCH OF SOMETHING.
SLASH


WHY DO HUMANS KILL THEIR OWN KIND?


THIS MAN LOVED HIS YOUNGER BROTHER MORE THAN ANYTHING, BUT HE KEPT HIS EYES ON THE BLOOD-DRENCHED FLOWERS SWAYING IN THE WIND... AND KILLED HIM.

ALL HE DID... WAS LOOK FAR, FAR AWAY...

THAT MAN HAS BEEN LIVING ALONE ON THIS ISLAND FOR DECADES, GAZING OUT AT THE STARS.

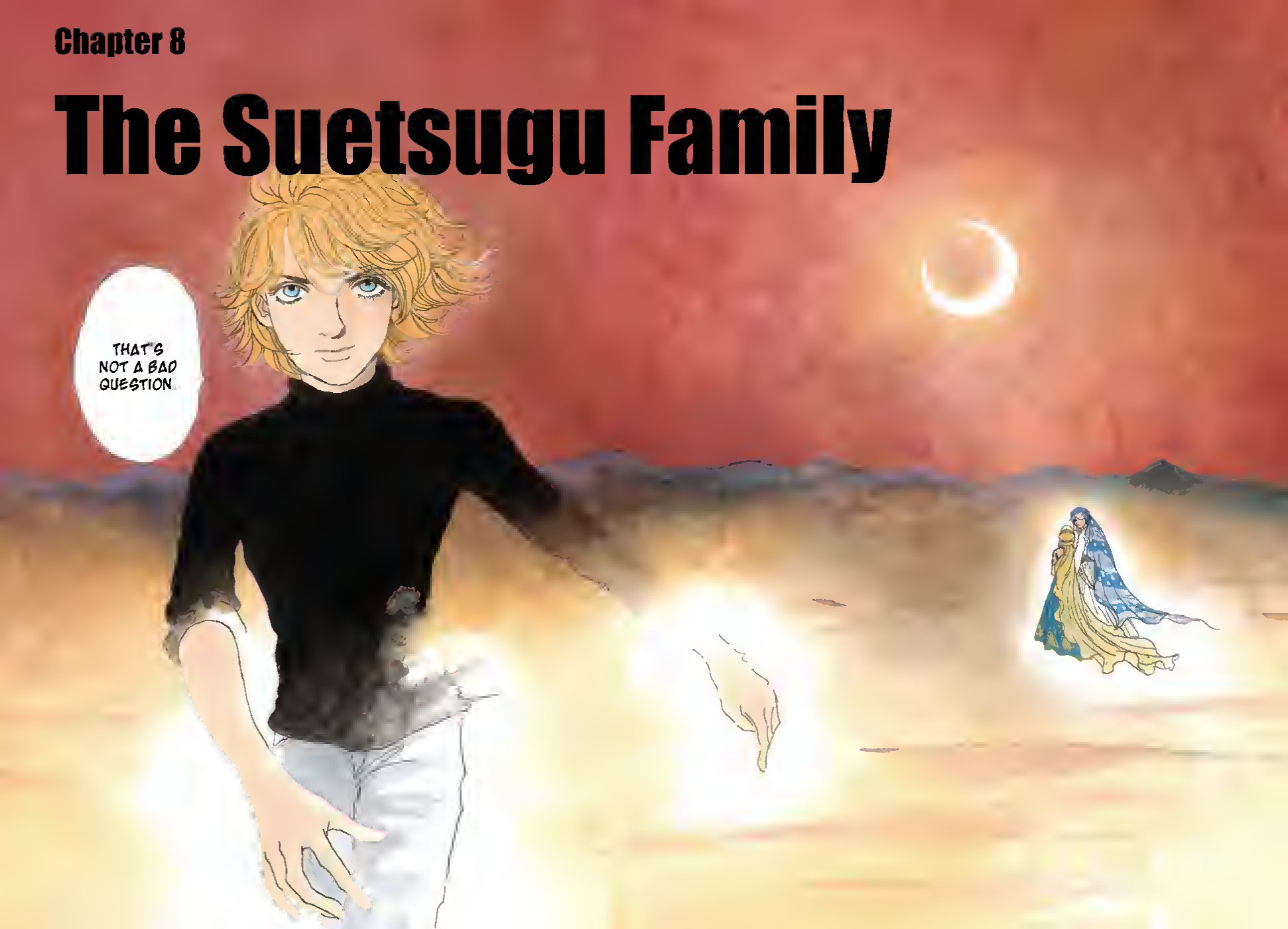

WHERE DO HUMANS FIND SO MUCH JOY?
THERE WAS A KING WHO BREATHED A HEAVY SIGH ON HIS NINETIETH BIRTHDAY.
HE RULED OVER THE HEARTS OF MILLIONS, AND ANYTHING IN THE WORLD WAS HIS IF HE DESIRED IT...
WHY AREN'T HUMANS EVER SATISFIED?

DO THEY...
AND WHY...
LOVE?

YOU WANT TO KNOW "WHY"? WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME?
WHY YOU FIND HUMANS SO INTERESTING?

Chapter 8

The Suetsugu Family



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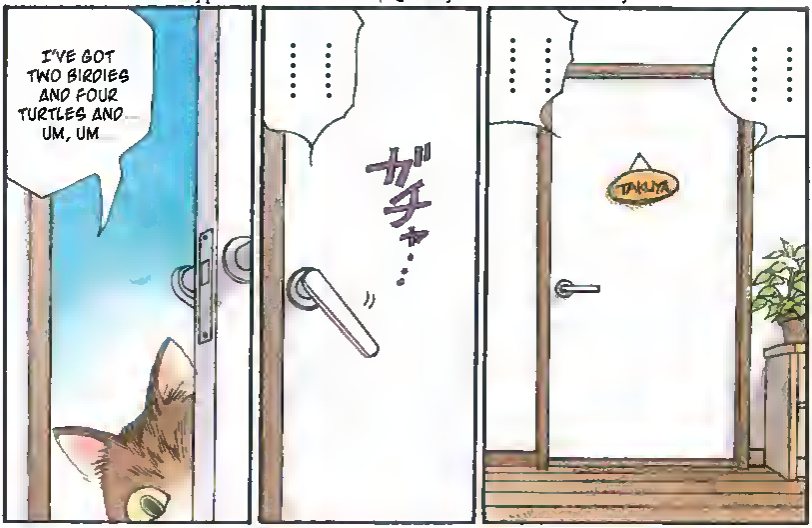

SFX: CLICK

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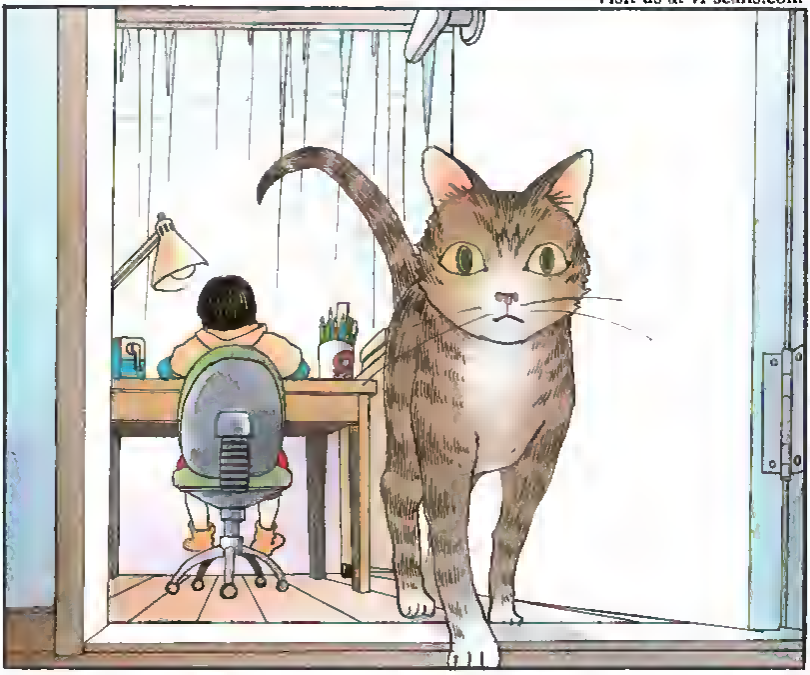
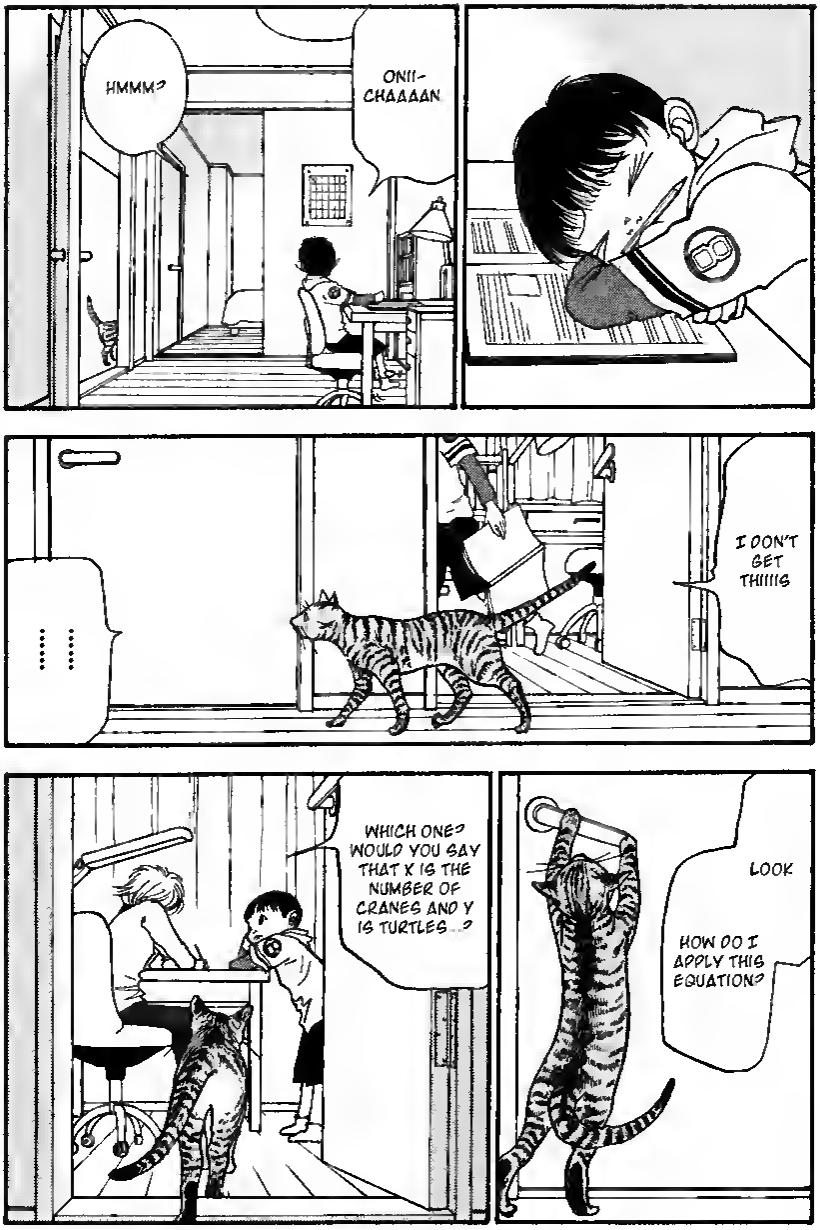
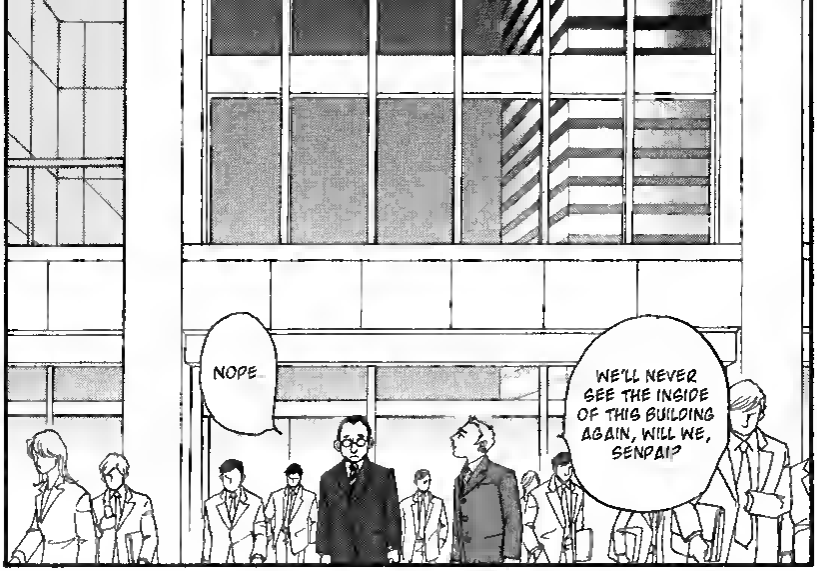
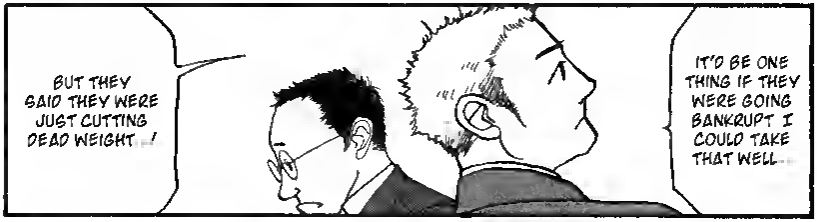



HMMM?
ONII-CHAAAAN
I DON'T GET THIIIIS
. . . . . .
WHICH ONE? WOULD YOU SAY THAT X IS THE NUMBER OF CRANES AND Y IS TURTLES...?
LOOK
HOW DO I APPLY THIS EQUATION?

DON'T GET DISTRACTED BY WHAT SOMETHING LOOKS LIKE TRY TO FIGURE OUT THE ESSENCE OF THE THING
BRINGING CRANES AND TURTLES IN JUST OVERCOMPLICATES THINGS
YUP, THE SAME FOR PEOPLE ANYWAY, WHAT WE LOOK LIKE ISN'T MUCH DIFFERENT FROM WHAT'S INSIDE
THEN, WHAT ABOUT YOU AND ME?
HMMMM
I GET IT!
HUMANS DON'T CHANGE VERY MUCH

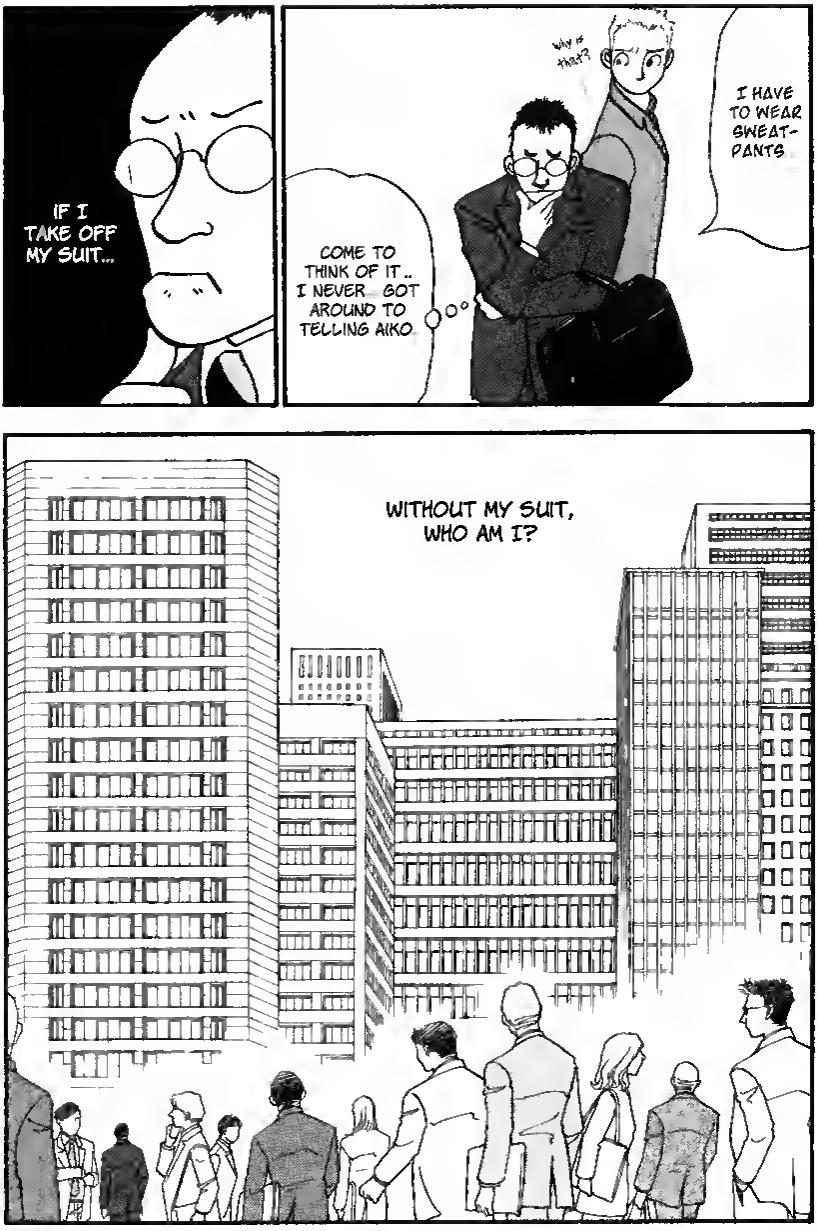

NOPE...
WE'LL NEVER SEE THE INSIDE OF THIS BUILDING AGAIN, WILL WE, SENPAI?


BUT THEY SAID THEY WERE JUST CUTTING DEAD WEIGHT...!
IT'D BE ONE THING IF THEY WERE GOING BANKRUPT I COULD TAKE THAT WELL...

HUH?
WHAT DO WE WEAR, STARTING TOMORROW...?

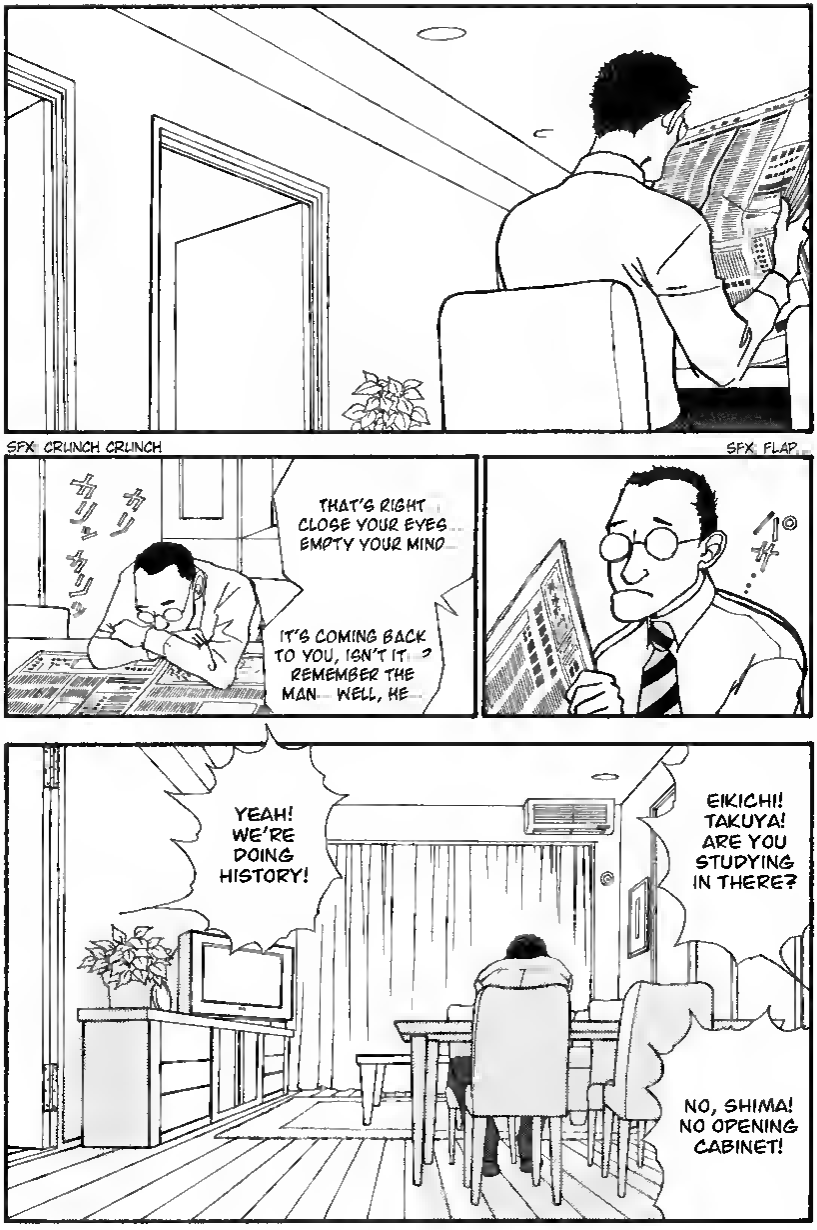
SAY...

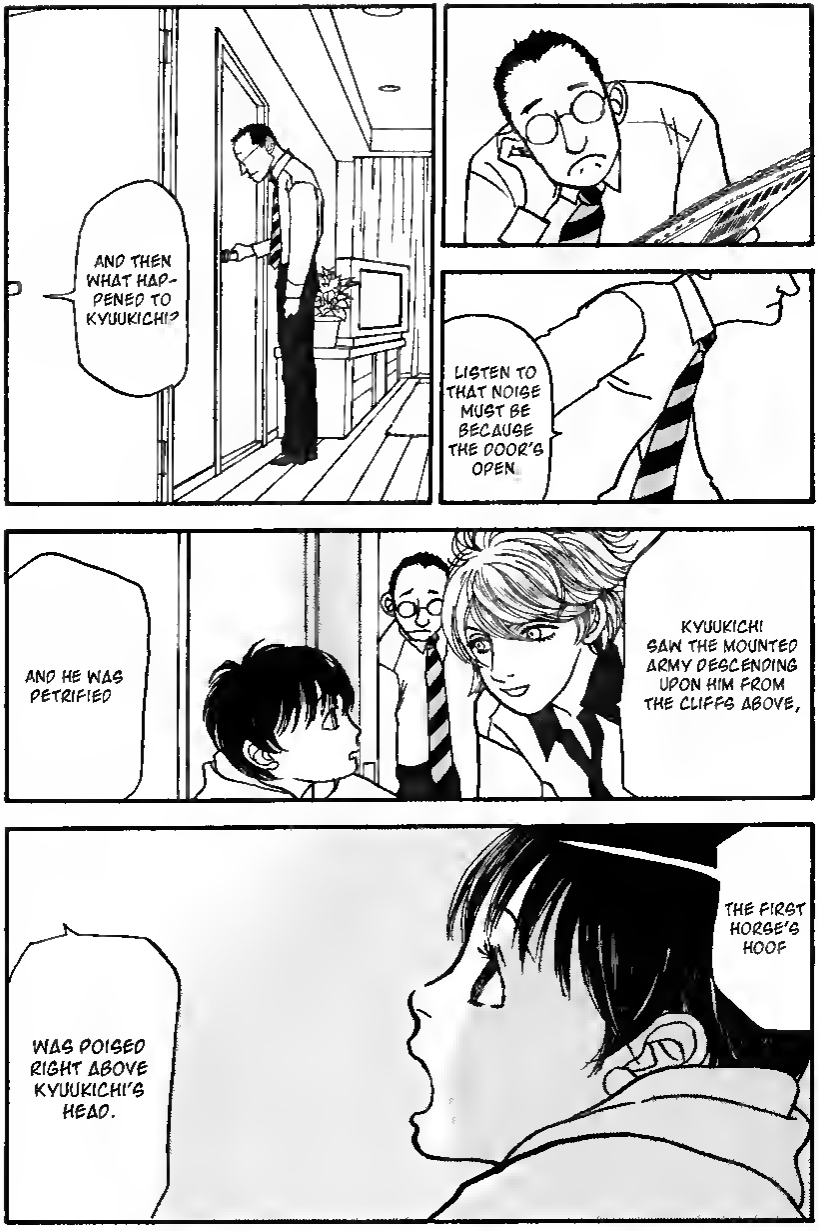
JEANS AND A T-SHIRT, I GUESS? UNTIL THE NEXT JOB
HMM... WEEELLL

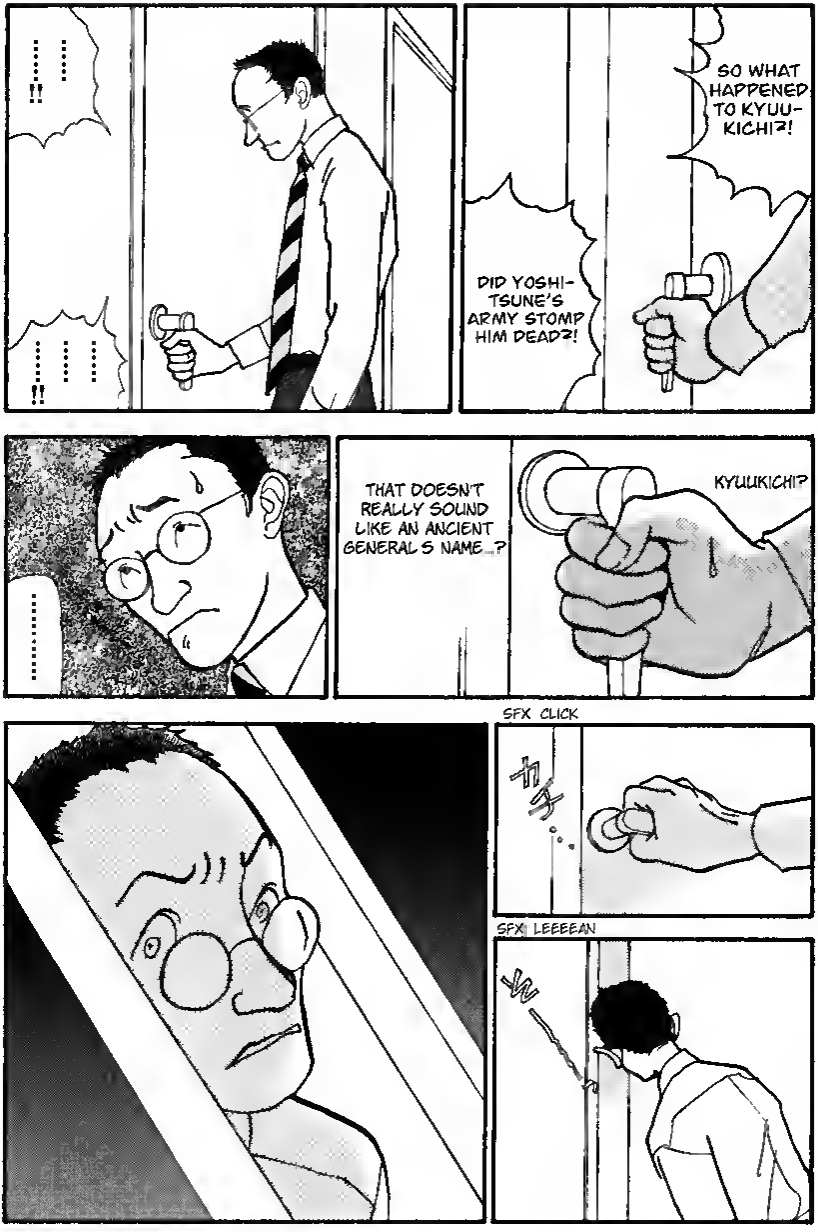

IF I TAKE OFF MY SUIT...
COME TO THINK OF IT.. I NEVER GOT AROUND TO TELLING AIKO
Why is that?
I HAVE TO WEAR SWEAT-PANTS
WITHOUT MY SUIT, WHO AM I?

PSSHA
PSSHA
PSSHA
PSSHA
PSSHA
PSSHA
SFX CREAK
SFX SNAP
SFX GOBBLE
SHUT

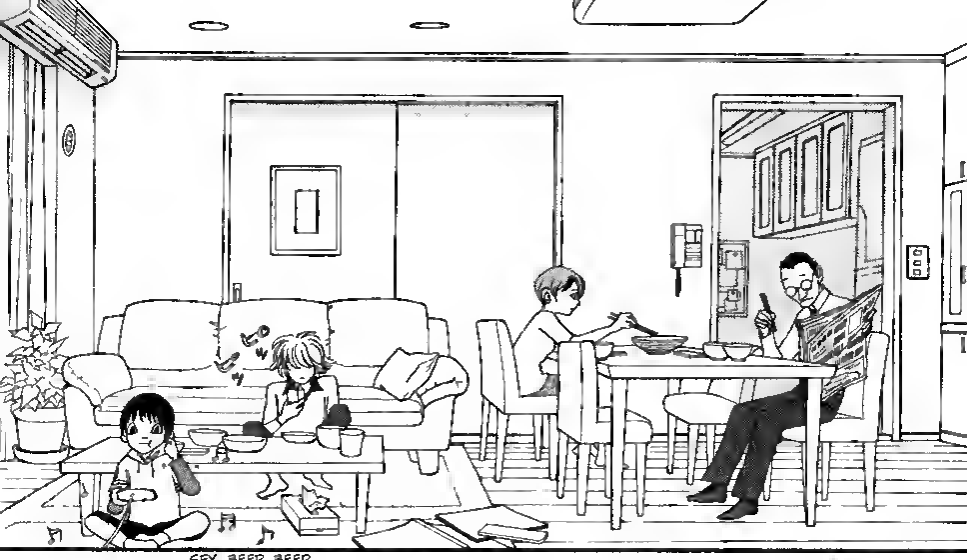
MMM... HOLD ON, WILL YA
ONII-CHAAAAN TELL ME THE REST OF THAT STORY!
SFX RUSTLE
HONEY, YOU'RE BACK ALREADY?
UH-HUH
WHERE IS THE PAPER?
ON TOP OF THE TV

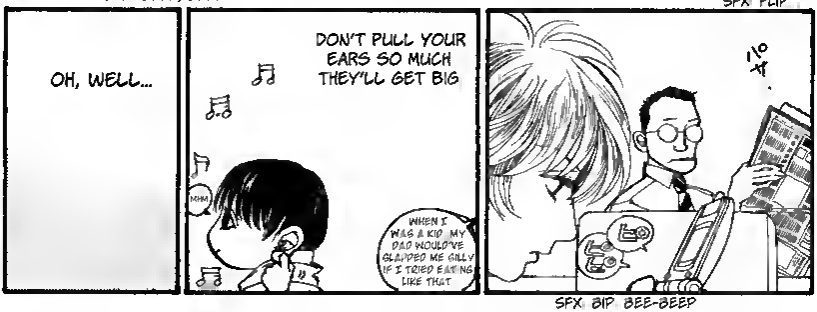

SFX: CRUNCH CRUNCH
SFX: FLAP
カリ
カリ
カリ
THAT'S RIGHT... CLOSE YOUR EYES... EMPTY YOUR MIND...
IT'S COMING BACK TO YOU, ISN'T IT...? REMEMBER THE MAN... WELL, HE...
ポ
YEAH! WE'RE DOING HISTORY!
EIKICHI! TAKUYA! ARE YOU STUDYING IN THERE?
NO, SHIMA! NO OPENING CABINET!

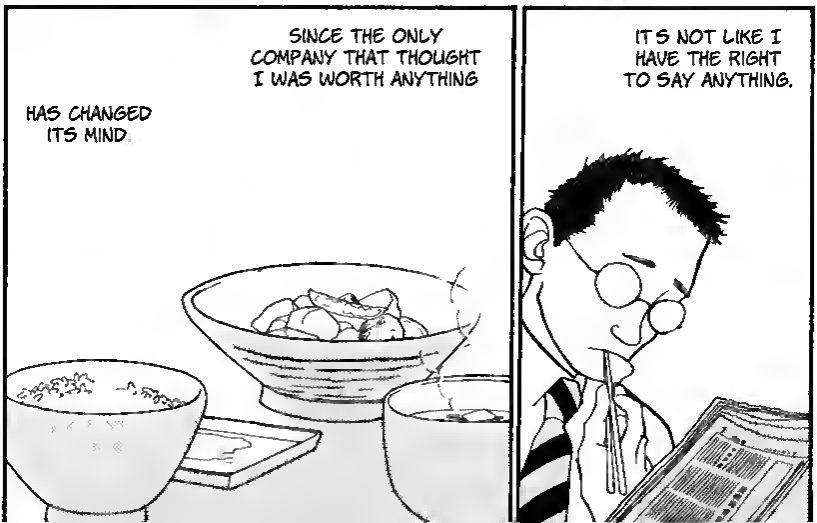

AND THEN WHAT HAPPENED TO KYUUKICHI?
LISTEN TO THAT NOISE MUST BE BECAUSE THE DOOR'S OPEN
KYUUKICHI SAW THE MOUNTED ARMY DESCENDING UPON HIM FROM THE CLIFFS ABOVE,
AND HE WAS PETRIFIED
THE FIRST HORSE'S HOOF
WAS POISED RIGHT ABOVE KYUUKICHI'S HEAD.


!!
!!
SO WHAT HAPPENED TO KYUU-KICHI?!
DID YOSHI-TSUNE'S ARMY STOMP HIM DEAD?!
THAT DOESN'T REALLY SOUND LIKE AN ANCIENT GENERAL'S NAME...?
KYUUKICHI?
SFX CLICK
SFX LEEEEAN

SFX: SLAM
ER, NOTHING
WHAT HAPPENED?
AM I LOSING IT?


SFX: BEEP, BEEP


OH, WELL...
DON'T PULL YOUR EARS SO MUCH THEY'LL GET BIG
MMM
WHEN I WAS A KID, MY OLD WOULD'VE SLAPPED ME SILLY IF I TRIED EATING LIKE THAT
SFX: FLIP
SFX: BIP BEE-BEEP

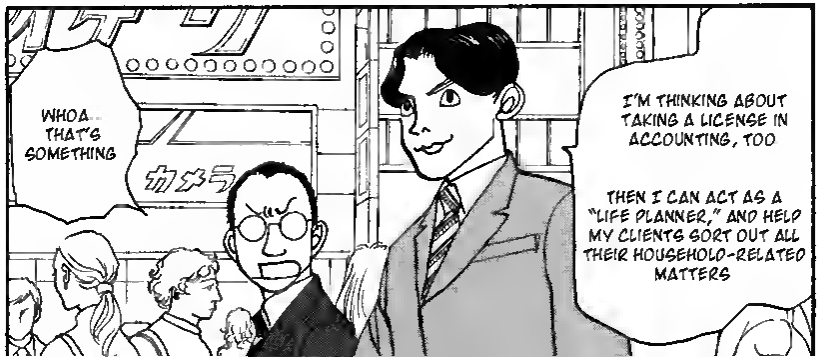

SINCE THE ONLY COMPANY THAT THOUGHT I WAS WORTH ANYTHING
HAS CHANGED ITS MIND.
IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY ANYTHING.

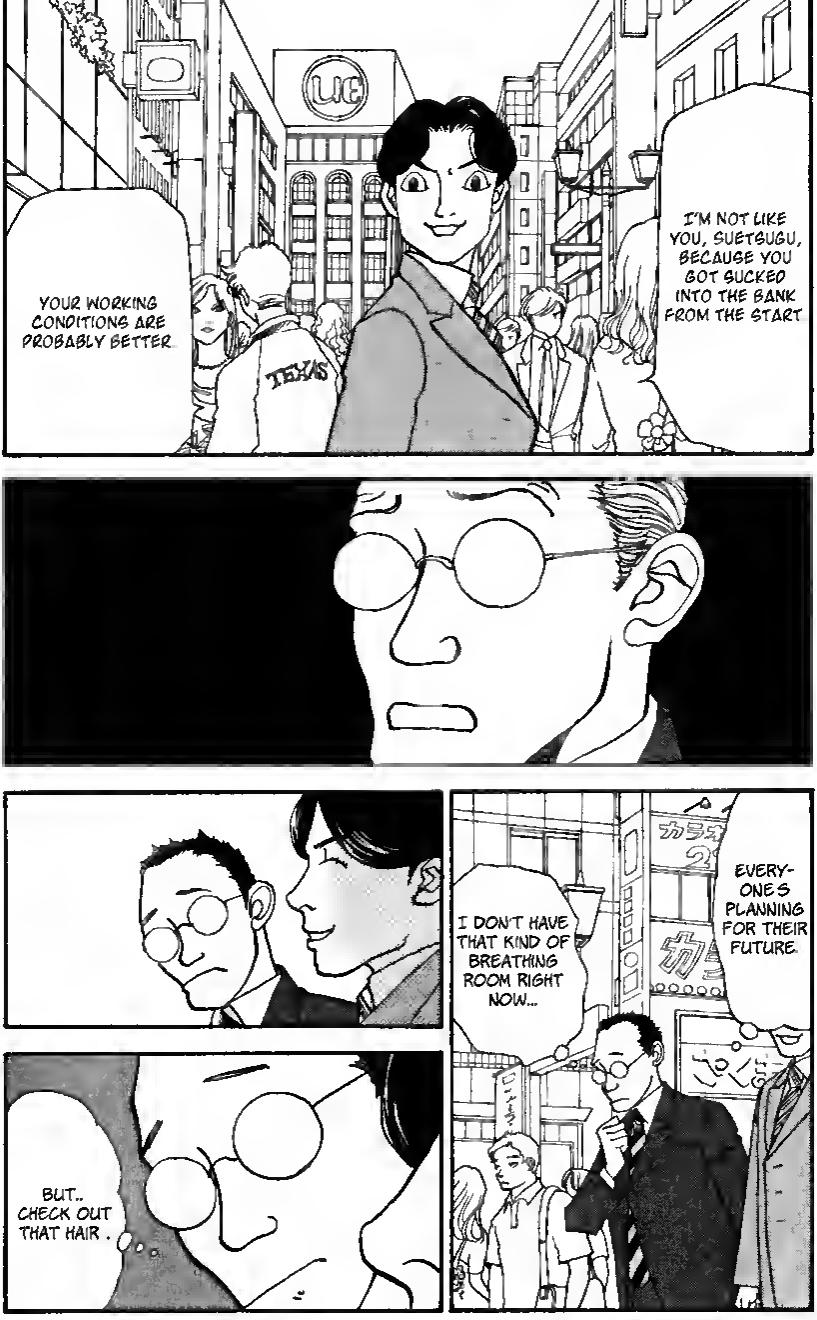
WHAT HAPPENED TO KYUUKICHI?
HE'S FINE.
I WONDER...
TAKUYA
SFX: BEEP
ANOTHER TWO INCHES AND HIS HEAD WOULD'VE BEEN KICKED IN
BUT HE LIVED ALL RIGHT

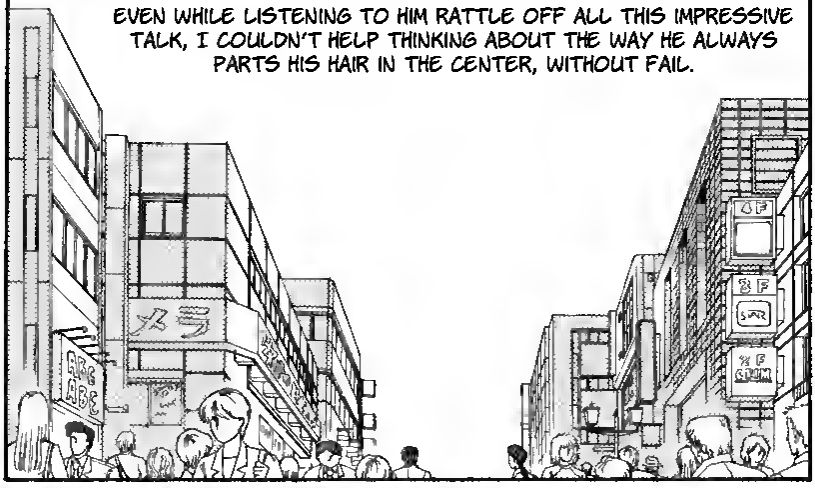
HUH?
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE TODAY, DAD
SFX: BEEP, BEEP
N-NOTHING...
EH
WHAT'S UP?
?
?

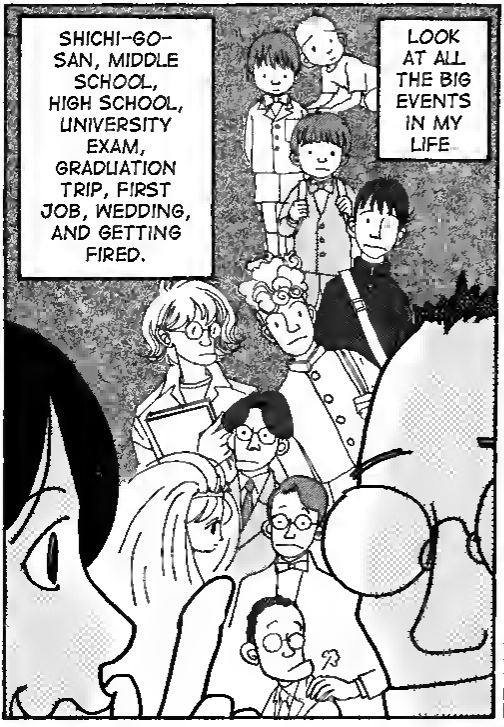
SIGN HELLO WORK

MY CONTRACT WITH THIS JOB IS OPEN, SO I STILL DO REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENTS AND CONSULTING ON THE SIDE
I'VE GOT A LOT OF GOOD CONTACTS FROM MY REAL ESTATE-DEALING DAYS SO I'M AT THE TOP OF THE HEAP NOW
I QUIT NOW I'M AT A FIRM THAT HANDLES INSURANCE FOR OVERSEAS BUSINESSES


WHOA... THAT'S SOMETHING
カメラ
I'M THINKING ABOUT TAKING A LICENSE IN ACCOUNTING, TOO
THEN I CAN ACT AS A "LIFE PLANNER," AND HELP MY CLIENTS SORT OUT ALL THEIR HOUSEHOLD-RELATED MATTERS


YOUR WORKING CONDITIONS ARE PROBABLY BETTER.
I'M NOT LIKE YOU, SUETSUGU, BECAUSE YOU GOT SUCKED INTO THE BANK FROM THE START
EVERY-ONE'S PLANNING FOR THEIR FUTURE.
I DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF BREATHING ROOM RIGHT NOW...
BUT.. CHECK OUT THAT HAIR .


EVEN WHILE LISTENING TO HIM RATTLE OFF ALL THIS IMPRESSIVE TALK, I COULDN'T HELP THINKING ABOUT THE WAY HE ALWAYS PARTS HIS HAIR IN THE CENTER, WITHOUT FAIL.


SHICHI-GO-SAN, MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY EXAM, GRADUATION TRIP, FIRST JOB, WEDDING, AND GETTING FIRED.
LOOK AT ALL THE BIG EVENTS IN MY LIFE

I'M PROBABLY..
NOT CUT OUT FOR DEALING WITH THIS KIND OF THING

WHAT WAS IT ALL WORTH?
See ya!
IF I THINK ABOUT IT THAT WAY, I'VE BASICALLY MADE IT THROUGH ALL THE MILESTONES OF A HUMAN LIFE.
NOTH-ING...
IF YOU TAKE AWAY THIS LIST OF CHECKPOINTS, WHAT'S LEFT?
SFX GASP
はっ
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
THAT'S RIGHT... NOTHING AT ALL.

HE'S WITH HIS FRIENDS.
EIKICHI...!
SALE
BOOK CENTER
H-HEY... WHAT'RE YOU UP TO...?
URK
HE SAW ME.

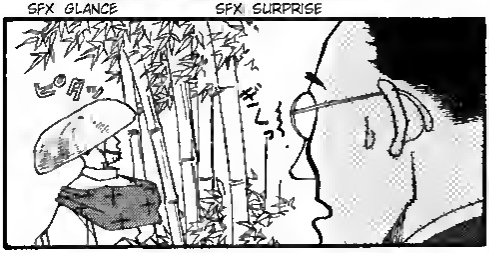
DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY THAT?
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
WHY AREN'T YOU AT SCHOOL...?
!?
SFX: FLASH

HUFF!
HUFF!
!
HUFF HUFF!
?
?

GOTTA HURRY!
GOTTA HURRY!
OH!
EXCUSE ME
KYUUKICHI-SAN
OH, MANNN. WAS IT LEFT OR RIGHT?
ARGH!

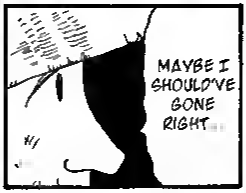
SFX: GLANCE

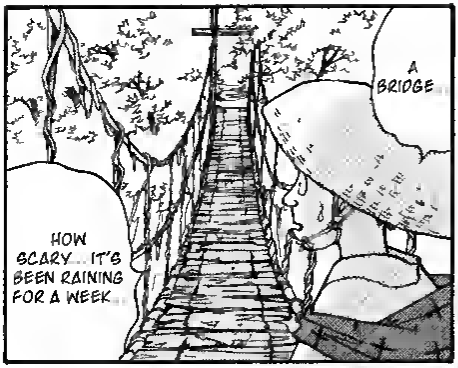
SFX: SURPRISE

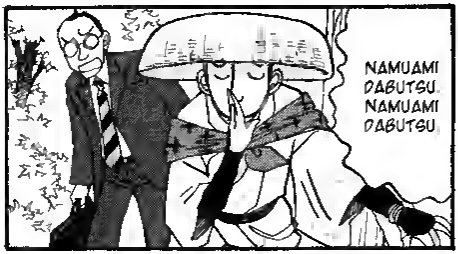


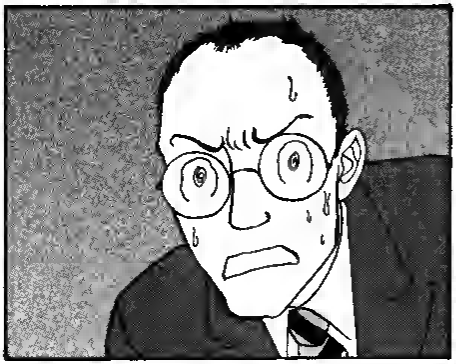
SFX: TWEE-TWEE-TWEET

SFX: GIGGLE GIGGLE



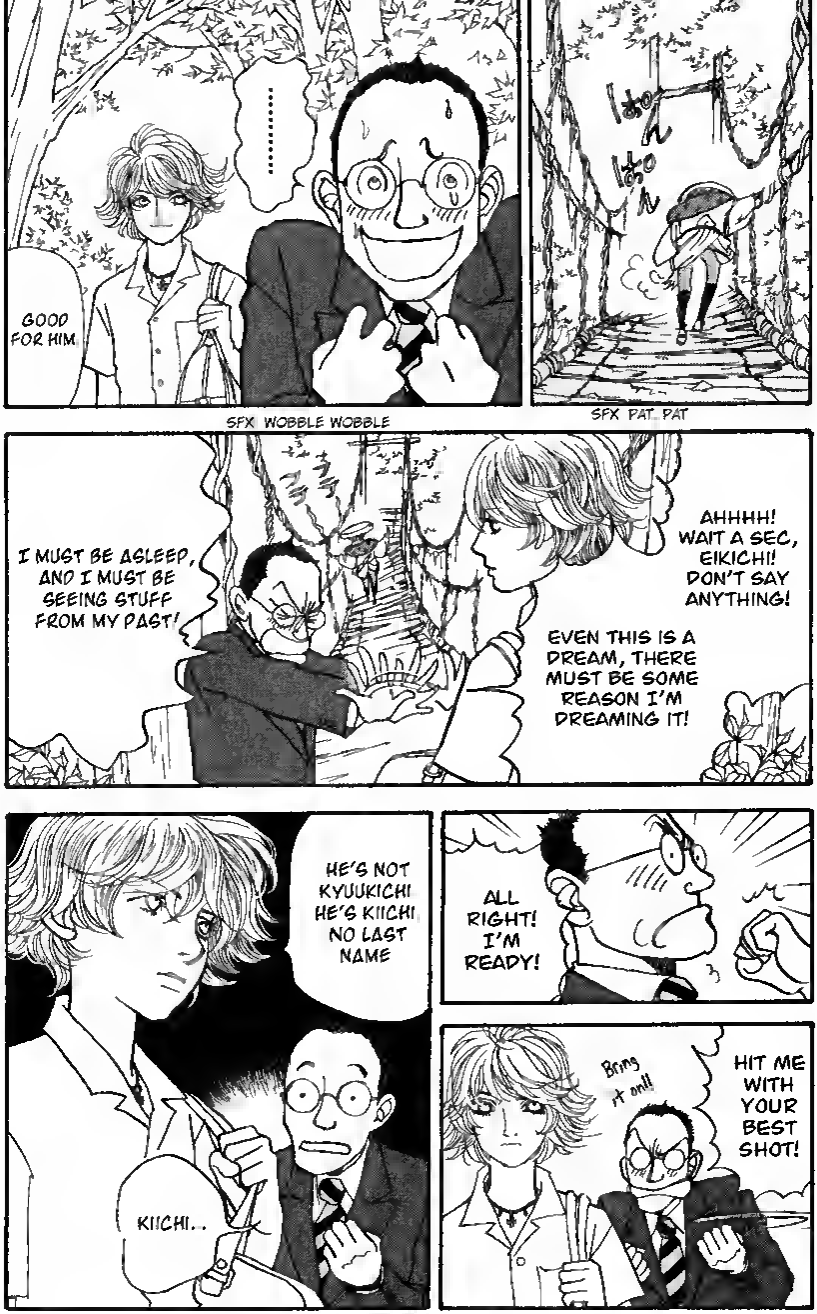

A BRIDGE
HOW SCARY... IT'S BEEN RAINING FOR A WEEK

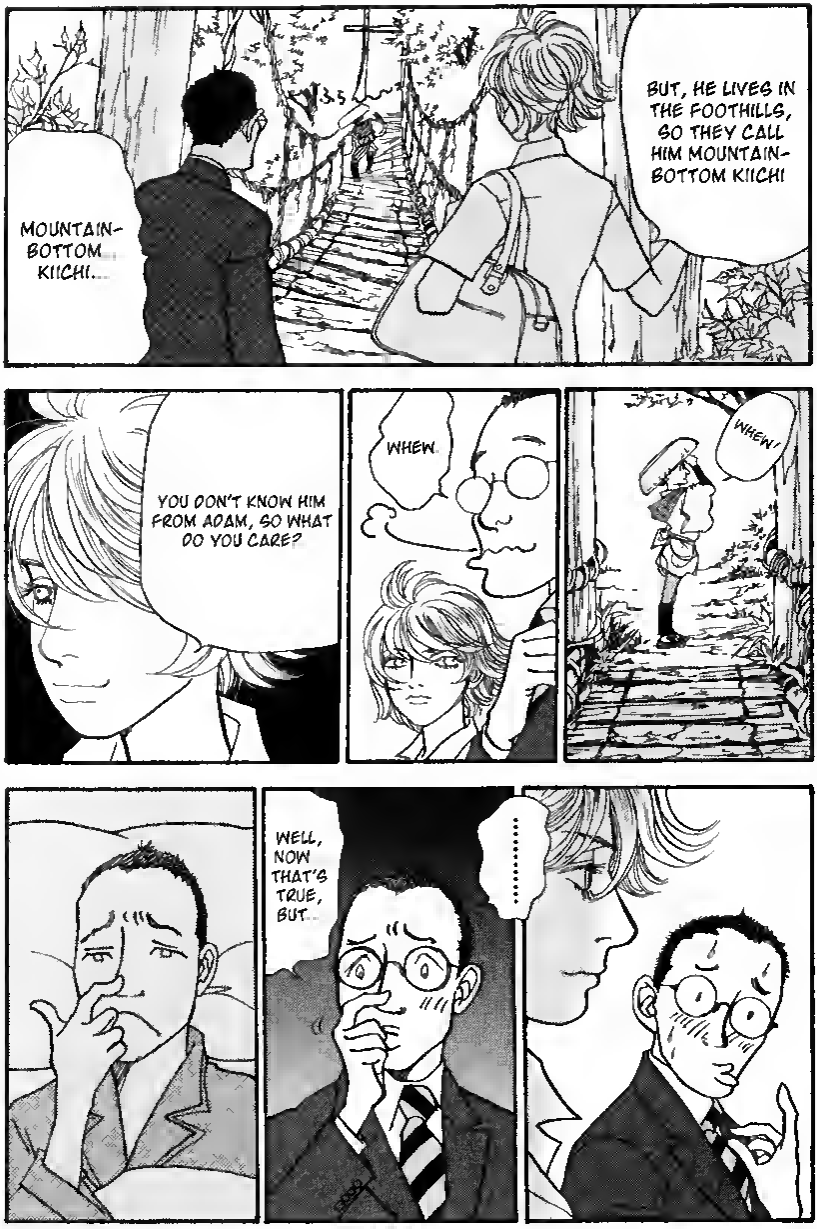

NAMUAMI DABUTSU NAMUAMI DABUTSU



SFX SWAY, SWAY
SFX SNAP
KYUU-
KICHI!!

SFX: SHATTER
OH, GOSH!


GOOD FOR HIM.
SFX WOBBLE WOBBLE
SFX PAT PAT
I MUST BE ASLEEP, AND I MUST BE SEEING STUFF FROM MY PAST!
AHHHH! WAIT A SEC, EIKICHI! DON'T SAY ANYTHING!
EVEN THIS IS A DREAM, THERE MUST BE SOME REASON I'M DREAMING IT!
HE'S NOT KYUUKICHI! HE'S KIICHI! NO LAST NAME
KIICHI...
ALL RIGHT! I'M READY!
Bring it on!!
HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT!

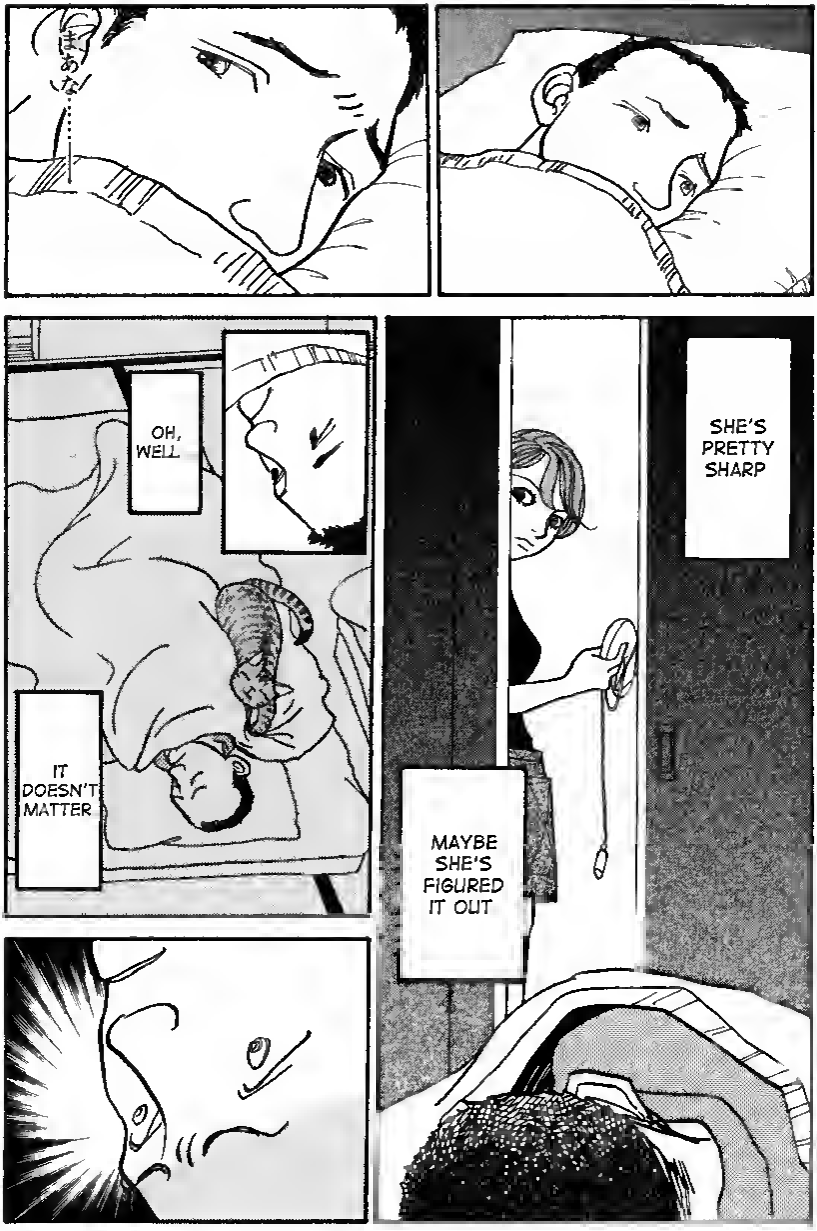

MOUNTAIN-BOTTOM KIICHI...
BUT, HE LIVES IN THE FOOTHILLS, SO THEY CALL HIM MOUNTAIN-BOTTOM KIICHI
YOU DON'T KNOW HIM FROM ADAM, SO WHAT DO YOU CARE?
WHEW.
WHEW!
WELL, NOW THAT'S TRUE, BUT...
.....

SO IT WAS A DREAM.
I'D BETTER..
I CAN'T LIVE LIFE ON THE EDGE LIKE KYUUKICHI OR MOUNTAIN-BOTTOM KIICHI.
MY STOMACH HURTS...
GET BACK TO SLEEP.
TAKUYA! I TOLD YOU TO GO TO SLEEP, BUT YOU'RE PLAYING GAMES, AREN'T YOU!

YAWN.
EIKICHI, YOU'RE UP JUST IN TIME. WOULD YOU FEED SHIMA FOR ME?
I GUESS I STILL CAN'T FOOL A CAT..
HERE, SHIMA.

OH! YEP.
MOM, IS BREAKFAST READY?
WOULD YOU GO WAKE DAD?
OH...
BUT THERE'S FOUR OF US.
MOM, WE NEED ONE MORE EGG.
SORRY, I'LL MAKE IT RIGHT AWAY.
What's gotten into me?
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I'VE GOT EVERY-BODY'S HERE.
DAAAD, WAKE UP!
PEOPLE ARE EASY, THOUGH

HEY.. LISTEN TO ME, TAKUYA YOU CAN'T BE SO EASYGOING
THESE DAYS YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE IT EVERYTHING YOU HAVE, OR YOU'LL HAVE NO FUTURE.
AHH! MOM, GIMME BACK THE CONTROLLER!
C'MON NOW! NO MORE PLAYING WHILE YOU EAT!
MOM WILL WORK HARD, TOO
SO, PLEASE WORK HARD
SFX: PURR, PURR, PURRRR
NO WAY.. DOES SHE KNOW
ABOUT THE LAYOFF?

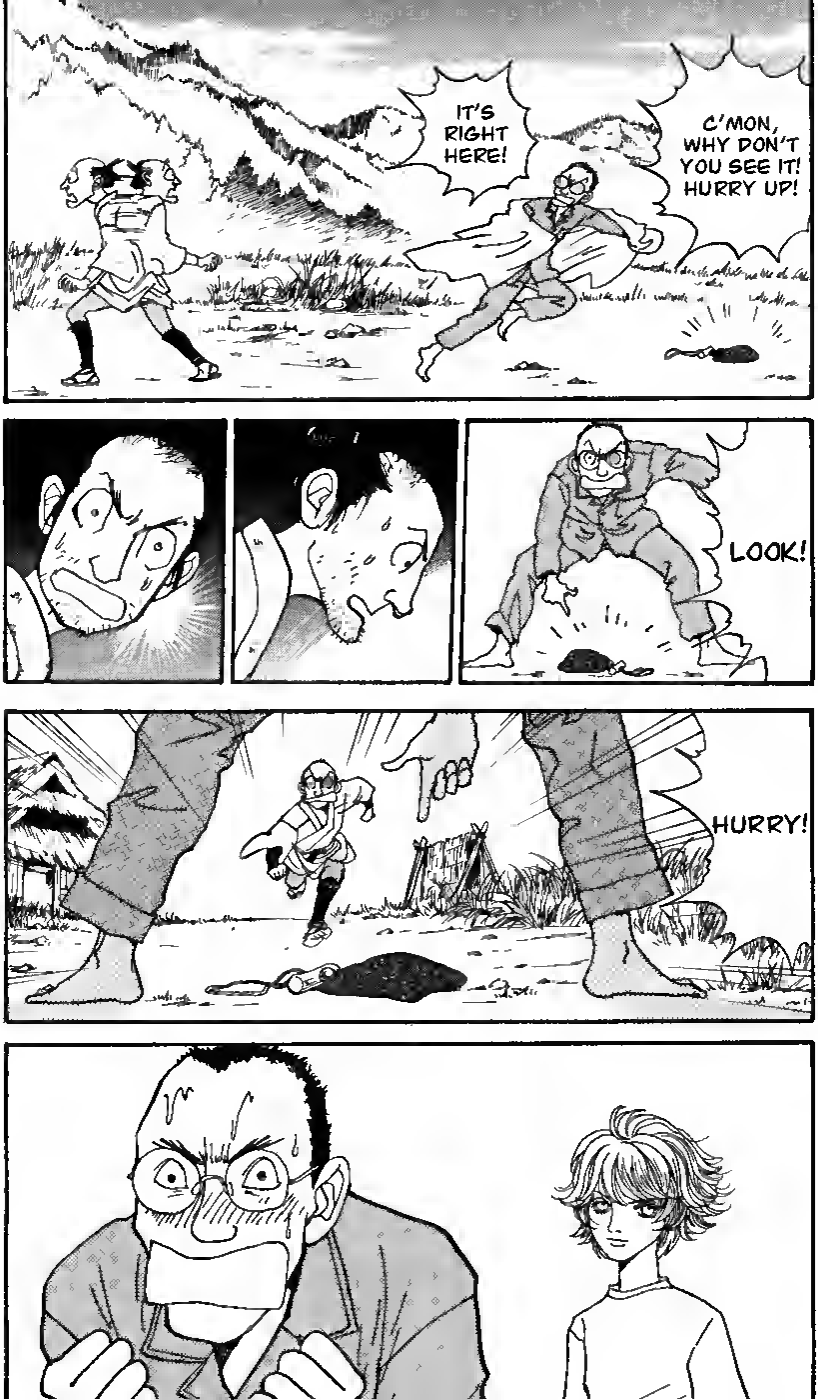

ほあな
OH, WELL
IT DOESN'T MATTER
SHE'S PRETTY SHARP
MAYBE SHE'S FIGURED IT OUT

KIICHI!
SFX: FLAP

I MADE IT...
IT'S MY VILLAGE...
DADDY BROUGHT YOU MEDICINE!!
HOLD ON, TAROU! JIROU! SABUROU!
HURRY!!
HURRY, KIICHI!!
OH, I GET IT.

SABUROU'S NOT LOOKING SO GOOD
TAROU AND JIROU DIED.
SFX: RUMMAGE RUMMAGE
THE MEDICINE! HURRY UP AND GIVE HIM MEDICINE!

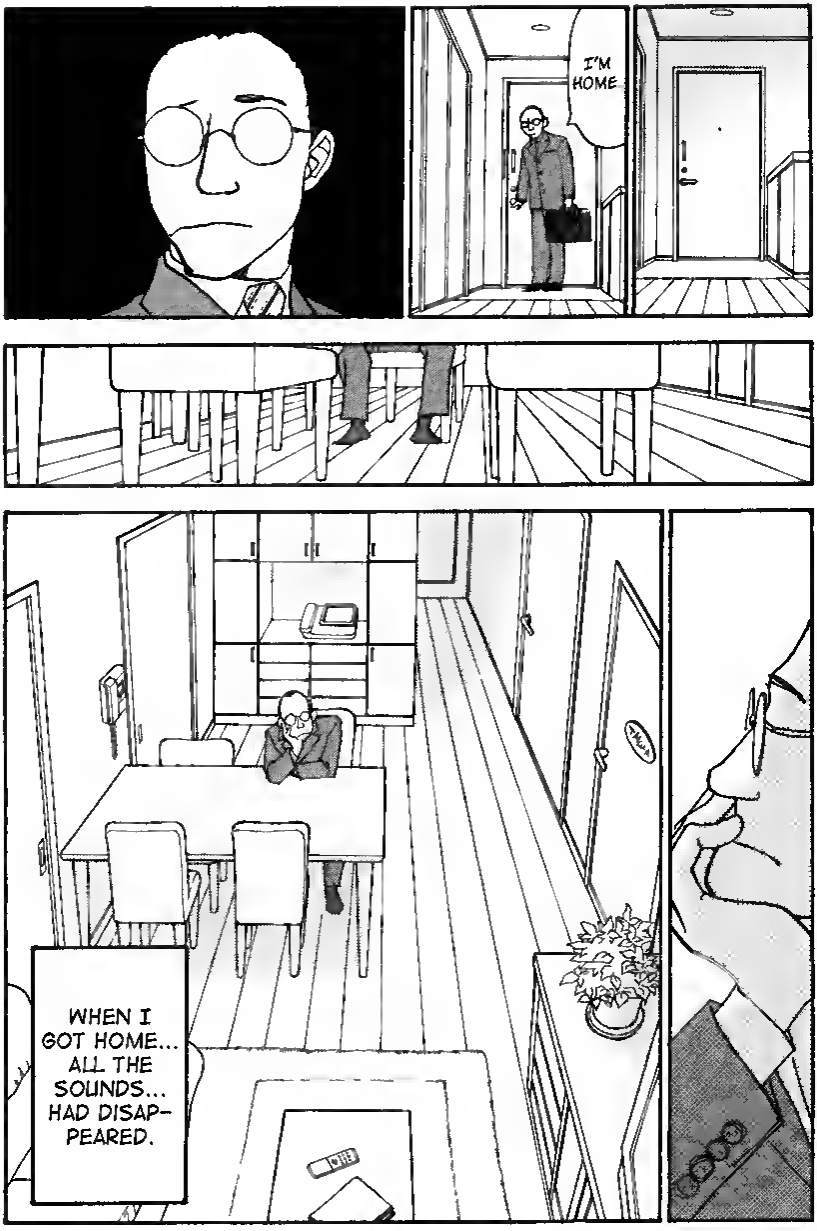
HUH?
WHA
Glasses
Glasses
LOOK! THERE!!
AHHH! IT'S OVER THERE!

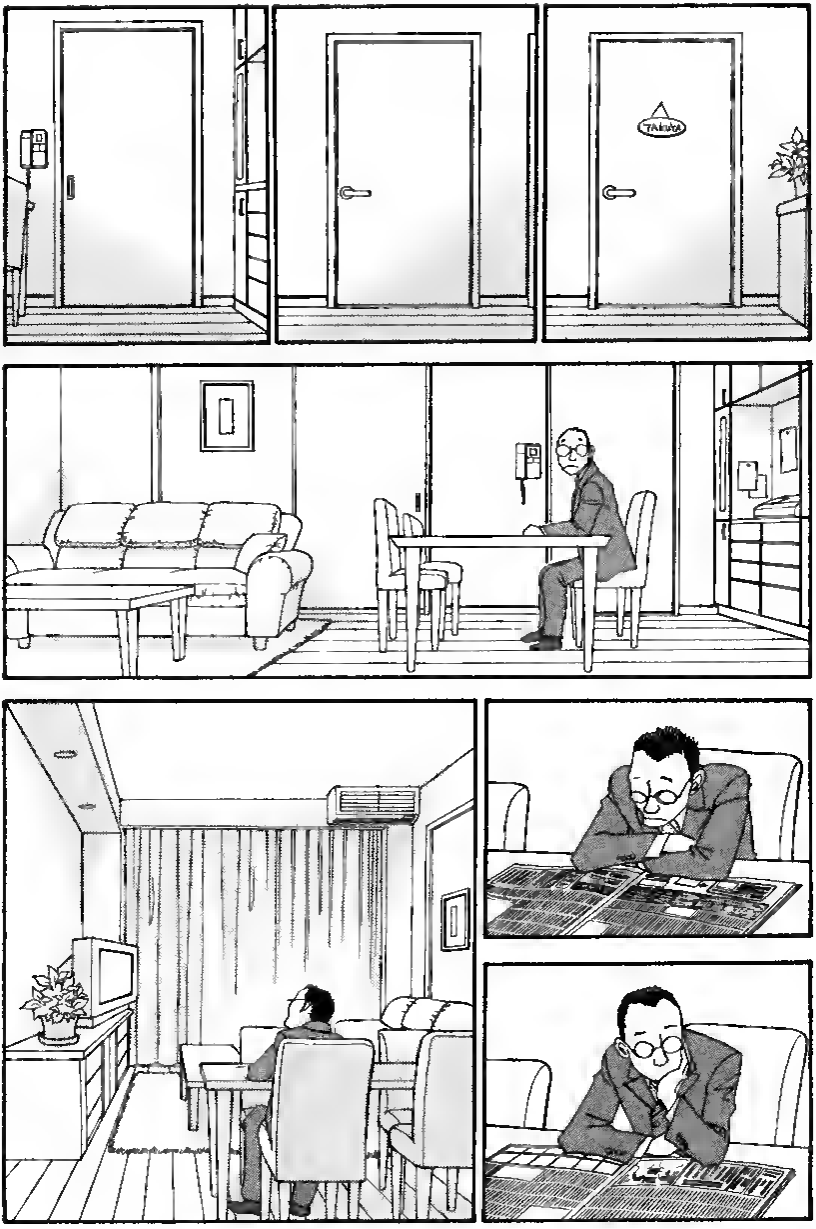

IT'S RIGHT HERE!
C'MON, WHY DON'T YOU SEE IT! HURRY UP!
LOOK!
HURRY!

SFX YEEEEAAAAHHH
ALL RIGHT! THIS IS GREAT!
IT'S UP TO YOUR BODY NOW! YOU CAN DO IT!
WHAT'S WITH THAT SMIRK?
IS HE TAKING ME FOR A FOOL?

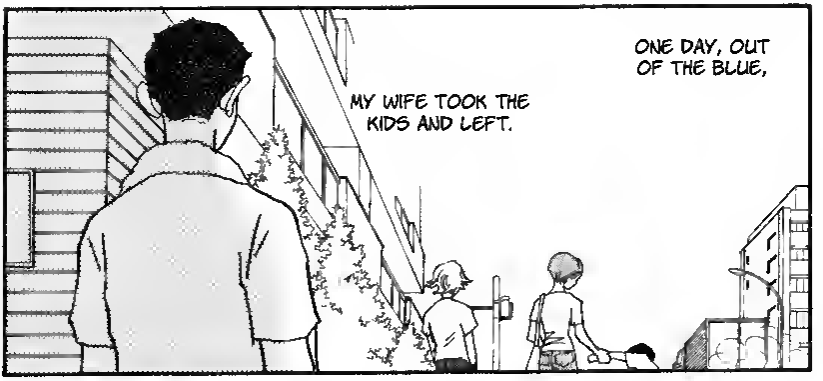
SO CALL ME A FOOL, LAUGH AT ME ALL YOU WANT!
WHATEVER!
PLEASE!
JUST LIVE!!!
LIVE!

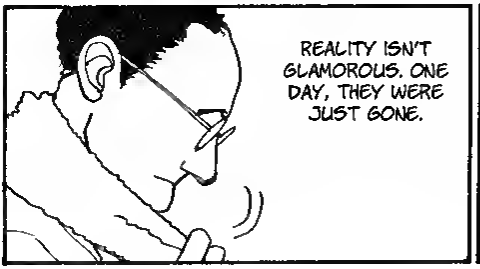
HM?
I WANTED TO ASK YOU SOMETHING
I'M GOING TO WORK
OH, HONEY
SHE HASN'T BEEN AROUND FOR THE LAST TWO OR THREE DAYS
SHIMA?
HAVE YOU SEEN SHIMA?
SFX: SHUT
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT,
I HAVEN'T
WONDER WHERE SHE COULD'VE GOTTEN TO?


I'M HOME
WHEN I GOT HOME... ALL THE SOUNDS... HAD DISAP-PEARED.

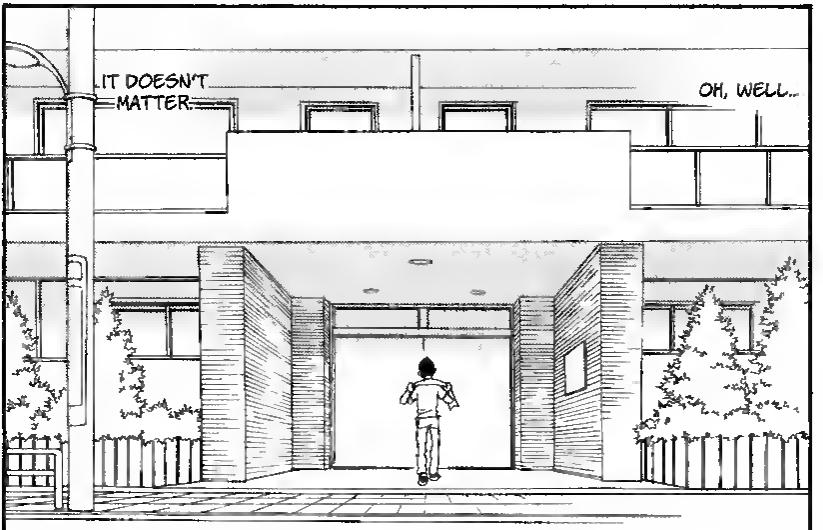

TAKUYA

IT'S OKAY. IF YOU WANT TO SEE DADDY, YOU CAN CALL HIM ON THE PHONE.
BYE
BYE, THEN
WE'LL HAVE LOADS OF FUN, STARTING TONIGHT!
WE'RE GOING TO GRANDMA'S HOUSE!


ONE DAY, OUT OF THE BLUE,
MY WIFE TOOK THE KIDS AND LEFT.


REALITY ISN'T GLAMOROUS. ONE DAY, THEY WERE JUST GONE.

JUST LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A DRAMA..
SO, THESE THINGS HAPPEN TO GUYS LIKE ME TOO, I THOUGHT...

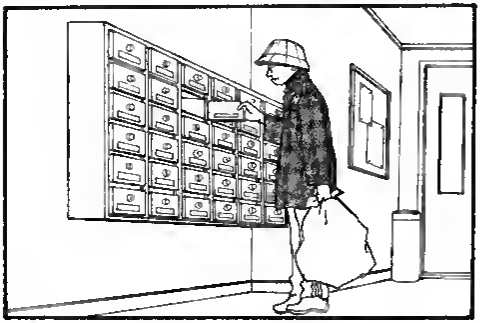

IT DOESN'T MATTER.
OH, WELL..

SFX: SLIDE
SFX: CLICK
ALL RIGHT, NOW, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT TAMA-CHAN.
11:27
THE CAT WHISPERER
ALL ABOUT TOOTH CARE
WHAT TIME IS IT?
SFX: BEEP, BEEP, BEEP
I DON'T HAVE TO DRAG MYSELF OFF TO WORK ANYMORE.
THIS IS THE 12 O'CLOCK NEWS!
I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MAKING TAKUYA STUDY ANYMORE.
I DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO MY WIFE AND EIKICHI NAG AND NAG AT ME ANYMORE.

I FEEL LIKE THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD'S LIFTED OFF MY SHOULDERS.

SFX: WRRGA WRRGA WRRGA

SFX: WURSH
SFX: WURSH
SFX: WURSH

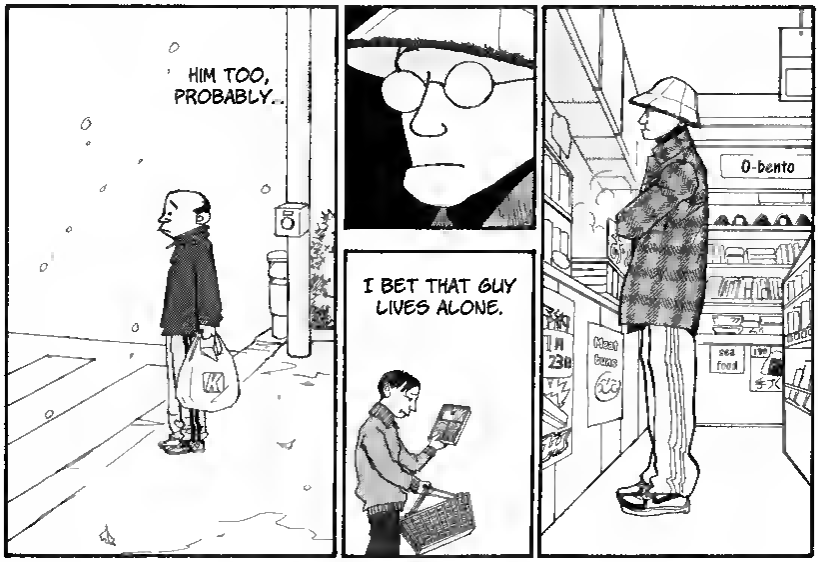

SFX: SHUT

TRASH ROOM

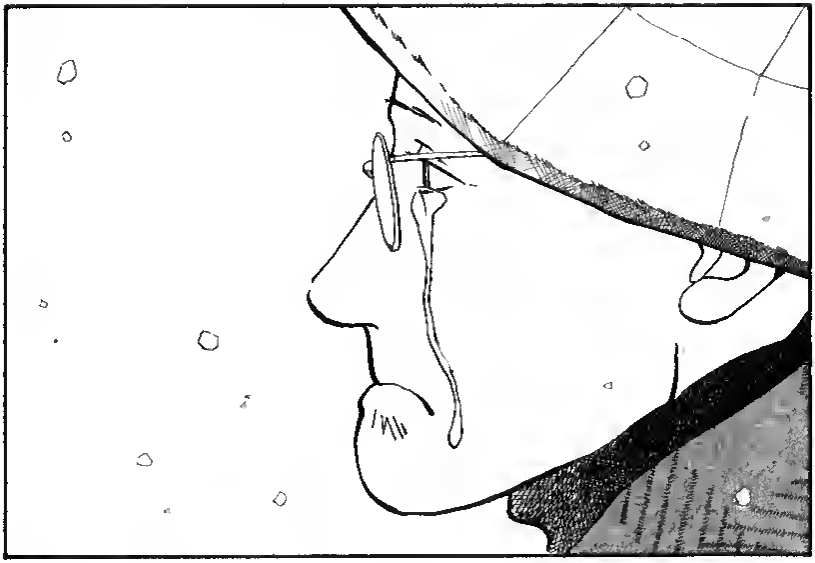
COIN POST
FLAMMABLE TRASH
CANS
BOTTLES

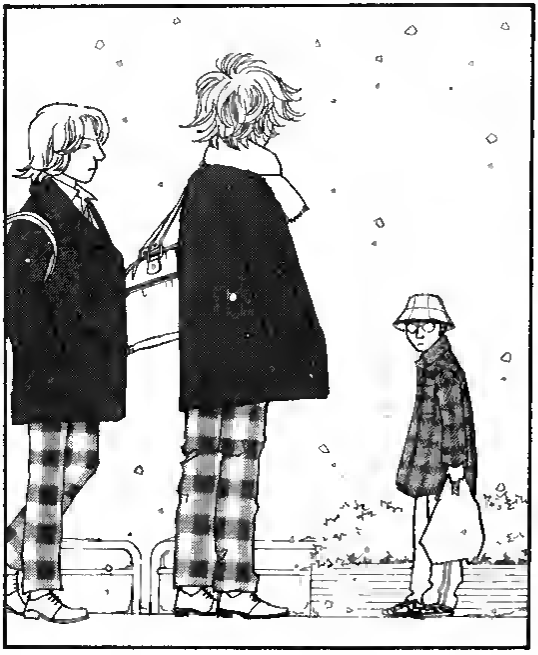
HM. . IT SHRUNK.

HAS IT GOTTEN WARMER?
KODAMA
Curry
Bento
Gift Shop


HIM TOO, PROBABLY..
I BET THAT GUY LIVES ALONE.
O-bento
Meat buns
sea food

THERE'RE LOTS OF PEOPLE WHO ARE ALONE IN THIS WORLD.
WE'RE ALL ALONE IN THE END, ANYWAY.





.....
HAVE YOU GROWN A LITTLE?
OKAY...
LET'S SIT?
THERE IS A BENCH OVER THERE

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE DOING FINE, TOO
FINE, I GUESS...?
...HOW ABOUT TAKUYA?
SHE'S FINE
.....
HOW'S YOUR MOM...?
.....
.....
SO, WHAT HAPPENED TO KIICHI'S SON, SABUROU?

OH, WOW
A NICE BIG FAMILY, HUH?
REALLY?!
SABUROU LIVED
HE GOT MARRIED WHEN HE WAS 20 AND HAD FIVE KIDS.
MAN... EVEN THOUGH YOU MADE HIM UP,
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT HIM!

DAISUKE?
YUP. HIS OLDEST DIED WHEN HE WAS 15, SO EVERYTHING WAS LEFT TO DAISUKE.
SABUROU'S SECOND SON WAS NAMED DAISUKE
HIS PARENTS ARRANGED FOR HIM TO MARRY KIKUYO, A GIRL FROM THE VILLAGE. IT WAS THE MIDDLE OF THE EDO ERA.
THEY GOT ALONG, AND THEIR FAMILIES GOT ALONG,
SO THEY WENT WITH THE FLOW AND GOT MARRIED.
BEFORE THE WEDDING,
THEY ARRANGED TO MEET IN FRONT OF A SHRINE OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE.
HMMM
EVEN THIS GUY— SOUNDS KIND OF SIMILAR TO ME...

THE WIND WAS STRONG THAT DAY.

HMM?
MAYBE THAT MEANS TAKUYA WILL ALSO...
ア"ッ ア"ッ ア"ッ
SFX BRRRR
ACTUALLY, ONE OF KIKUYO'S FAMILY'S SHEDS HAD BLOWN DOWN.
SHE DIDN'T GET THERE ON TIME.
SFX PUFF
AND THEN...
!?
URGH!

!?
?
.....
KIKUYO-SAN..?
NO.
IT'S JUST A PASSER-BY, SOMEONE ON A JOURNEY.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! SHE LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE HER!
THAT'S NOT MOM
HONEY! AIKO!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
ISN'T THAT YOUR MOM?!
SFX IGNORE
あ
RIGHT, HON...?
IT'S ME! DADDY! NAOYA! YOUR HUSBAND!
HEY, AIKO!
LOOK AT ME, AIKO!

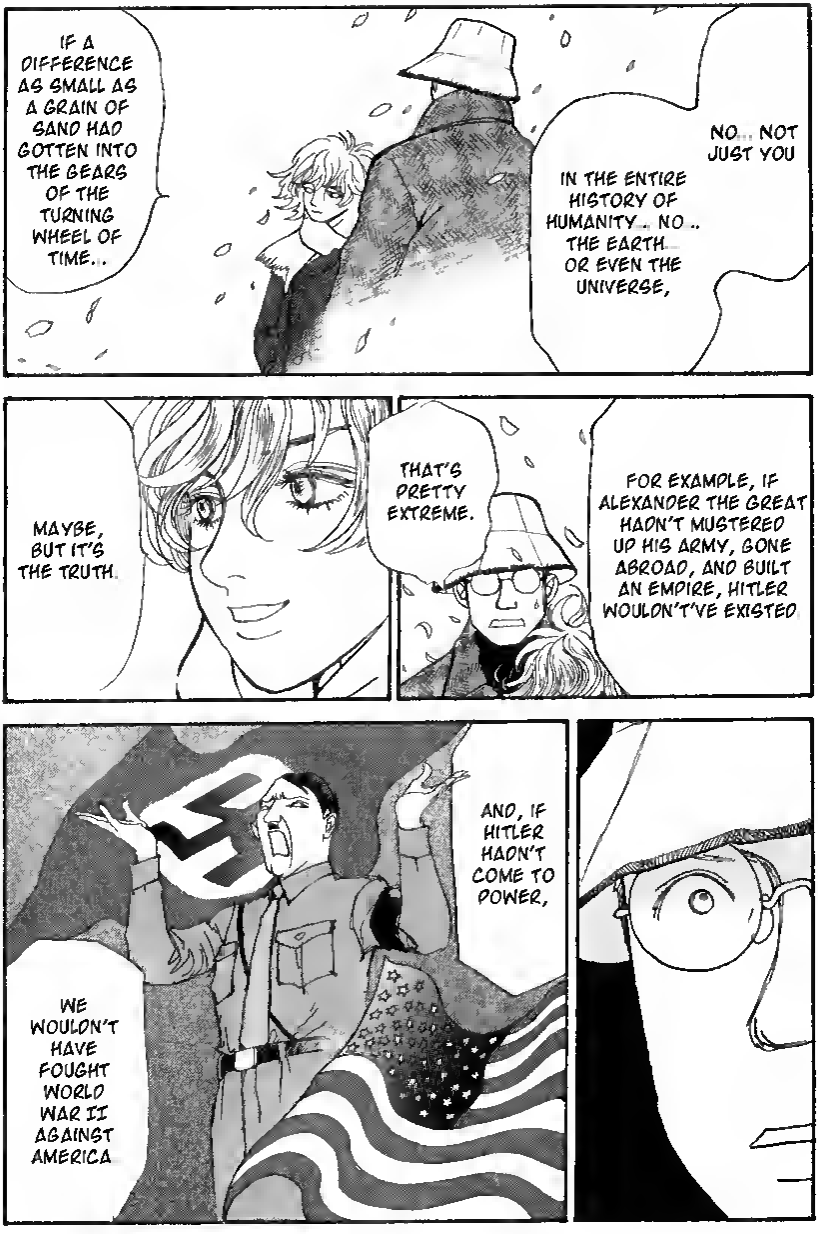
EXCUSE ME...
ARE. YOUR EYES ALL RIGHT?
YOU MUSTN'T RUB THEM WITH DIRTY HANDS.
はあ
はあ
SFX: HAA, HAA
はあ
はあ
TH- THAT'S...
THAT!

THAT'S ME!!
GET YOUR HANDS OFF HER!
THIS IS MY AIKO!
THAT'S ME!!
SFX: SMILE
OH...! IT'S ALL RIGHT, KEEP THE HANDKER CHIEF.
UM...

WELL, THEN.. I SHOULD GET GOING.
THAT'S RIGHT! GOOD! GO FOR IT!
OH/ ERM.. I...
OH.
UM.
HEY, AIKO!! WHY'RE YOU WALKING AWAY?!
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN FOLLOW YOU!
HEY, AIKO! WE MIGHT NEVER GET THE CHANCE TO MEET AGAIN!
DON'T GO!

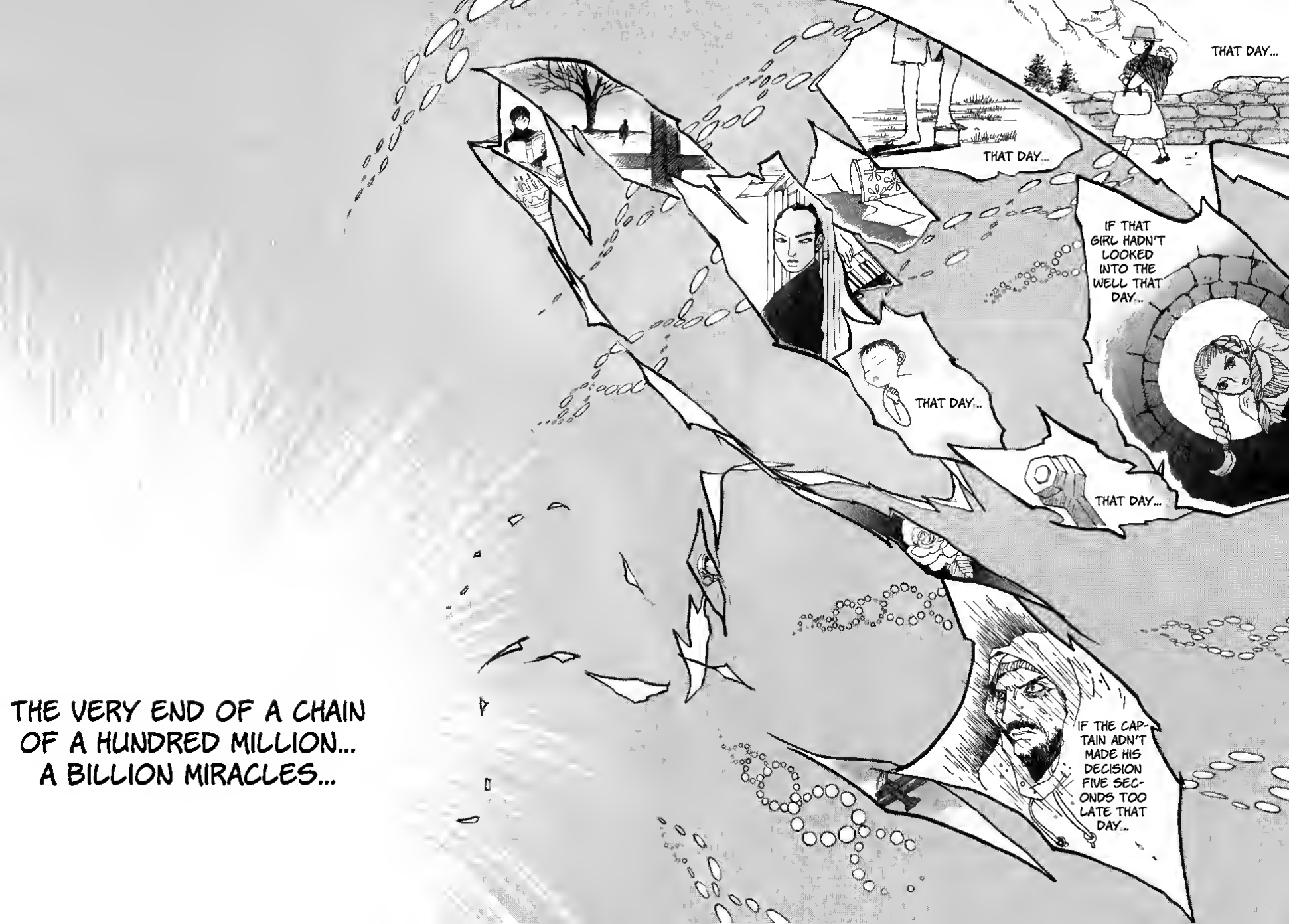
WHAT! LET GO!
IF HE CAN'T DO IT, I'M GOING TO RUN AFTER AIKO!
IF THESE TWO MEET HERE,
YOU WON'T EXIST, DAD.
HUH...?
AND NEITHER WILL MOM
AIKO?!

SHE'S MOM'S ANCESTOR, GOING BACK 15 GENERATIONS.
AND YOU'RE DAISUKE'S 12TH GENERATION DESCENDENT.
ALL THESE PEOPLE THAT YOU'VE SEEN, IF THEIR LIVES HAD DEVIATED BY THE SLIGHTEST BIT,
YOU WOULDN'T EXIST.


IF A DIFFERENCE AS SMALL AS A GRAIN OF SAND HAD GOTTEN INTO THE GEARS OF THE TURNING WHEEL OF TIME..
NO... NOT JUST YOU
IN THE ENTIRE HISTORY OF HUMANITY.. NO .. THE EARTH... OR EVEN THE UNIVERSE,
MAYBE, BUT IT'S THE TRUTH.
THAT'S PRETTY EXTREME.
FOR EXAMPLE, IF ALEXANDER THE GREAT HADN'T MUSTERED UP HIS ARMY, GONE ABROAD, AND BUILT AN EMPIRE, HITLER WOULDN'T'VE EXISTED
WE WOULDN'T HAVE FOUGHT WORLD WAR II AGAINST AMERICA
AND, IF HITLER HADN'T COME TO POWER,

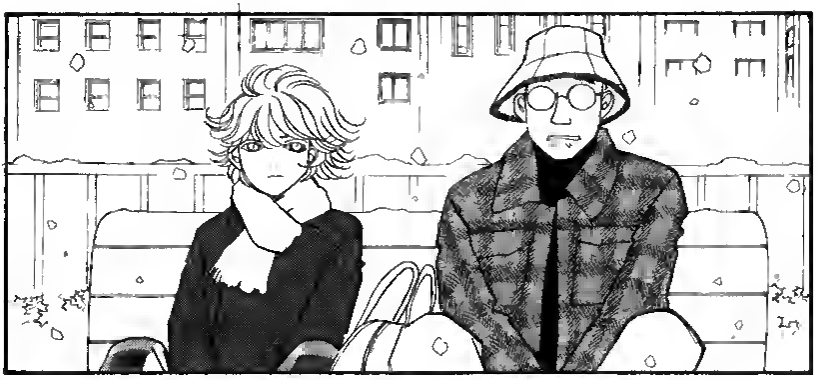
IF WE HADN'T FOUGHT AMERICA, A MAN NAMED KOGA MINETAROU WOULDN'T HAVE DIED IN THE WAR
IF HE HADN'T DIED, HIS WIFE TOMIKO WOULDN'T HAVE REMARRIED
AND YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN BORN
IF YOU HADN'T TRIPPED AND FALLEN ON YOUR WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL WHEN YOU WERE NINE YEARS OLD,
IF SHE HADN'T BRUSHED HER TEETH ON JUNE 3RD OF HER SECOND YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL,
TAKUYA WOULDN'T EXIST, EITHER

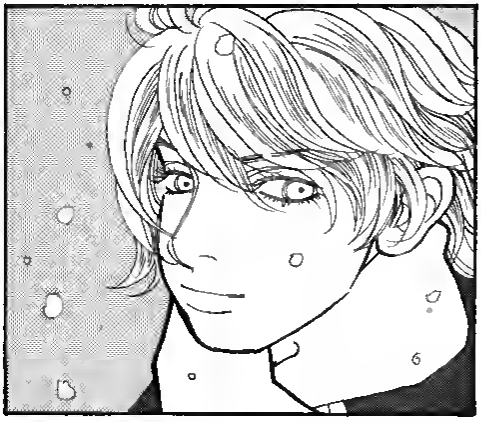
IF THAT SHIP HADN'T BEEN CAUGHT IN THE STORM THAT DAY...
IF THAT LITTLE GIRL HADN'T PLUCKED THAT DANDELION ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD THAT DAY...
IF...
IF SOMEONE HAD PAID CLOSER ATTENTION TO LENIN'S DYING WORDS THAT DAY...
WE ARE THE END RESULT OF A LONG, LONG SERIES OF COINCIDENCES AND CHANCES.
THAT DAY.
WATCH OUT FOR STALIN.
ALEXANDER'S ARMY HAD LOST TO THE PERSIANS THAT DAY...
IF THAT OLD WOMAN HADN'T GONE TO VISIT THAT GRAVE THAT DAY...
IF HE HADN'T GONE EAST AND SHE HADN'T GONE NORTH THAT DAY...
IF THAT BOY HADN'T BEEN ABOUT TO LAUGH THAT DAY...
IF THAT CHILD HADN'T SWALLOWED TEARS CAUSED BY A MOTHER'S ANGER THAT DAY...
IF THAT ADVENTURER LOST IN THE JUNGLE HADN'T BROKEN HIS LEG THAT DAY..
IF THAT YOUNG GIRL HADN'T GONE SWIMMING ALONE IN THE NILE THAT DAY..
IF THAT FATHER HAD BELIEVED IN HIS SON THAT DAY...

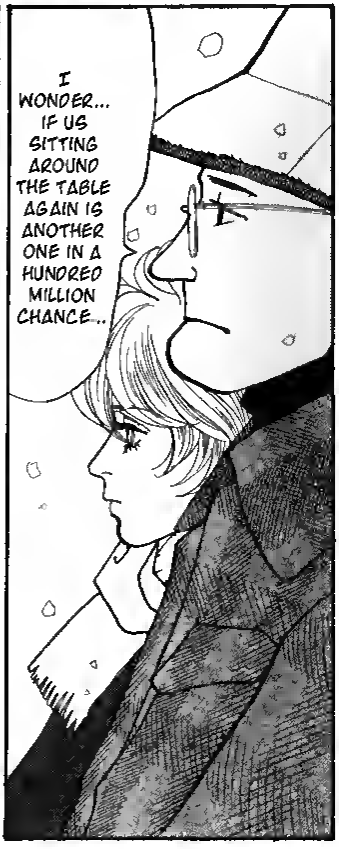

THAT DAY...
THAT DAY...
IF THAT GIRL HADN'T LOOKED INTO THE WELL THAT DAY...
THAT DAY...
THAT DAY...
IF THE CAPTAIN ADN'T MADE HIS DECISION FIVE SECONDS TOO LATE THAT DAY...
THE VERY END OF A CHAIN OF A HUNDRED MILLION... A BILLION MIRACLES...

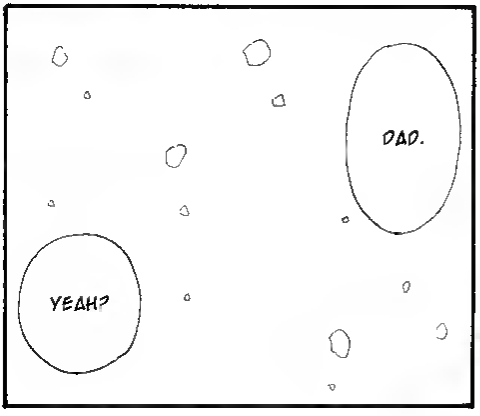
IS US

SITTING AROUND
THE TABLE...

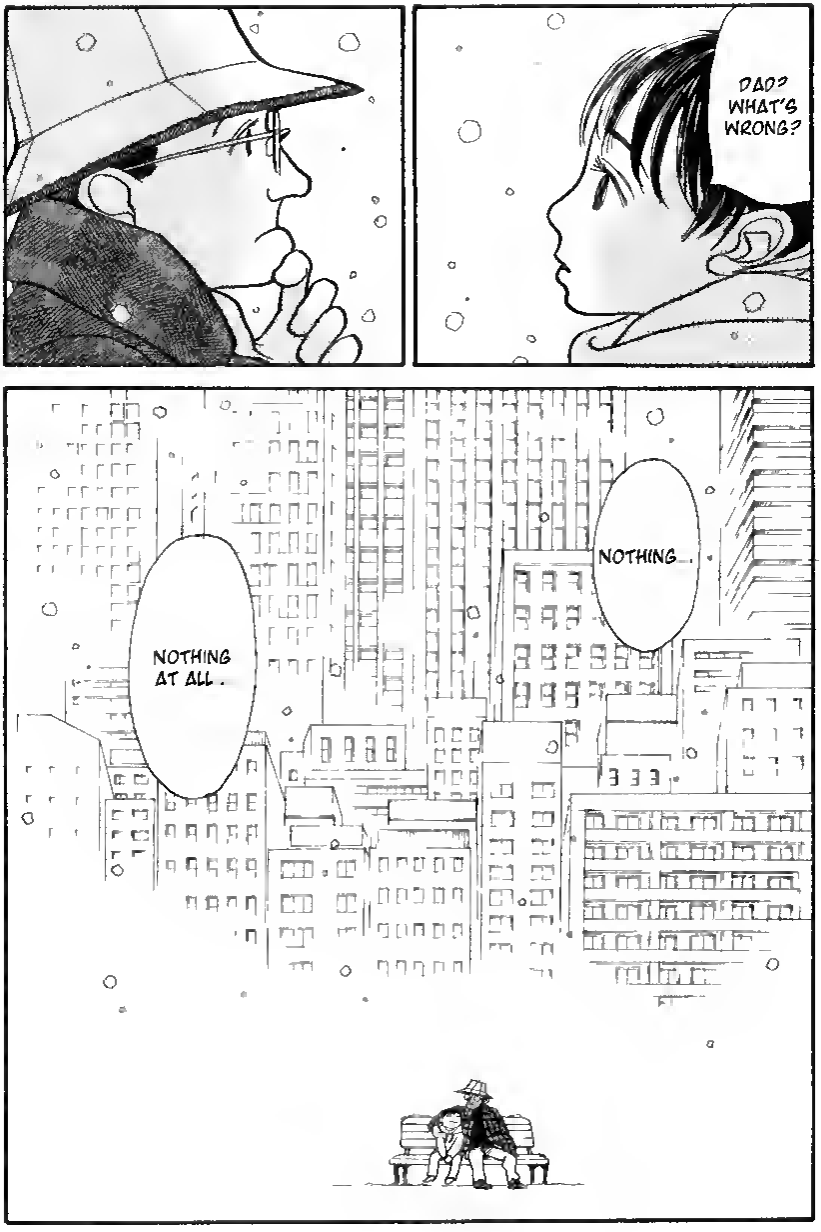





I WONDER... IF US SITTING AROUND THE TABLE AGAIN IS ANOTHER ONE IN A HUNDRED MILLION CHANCE...

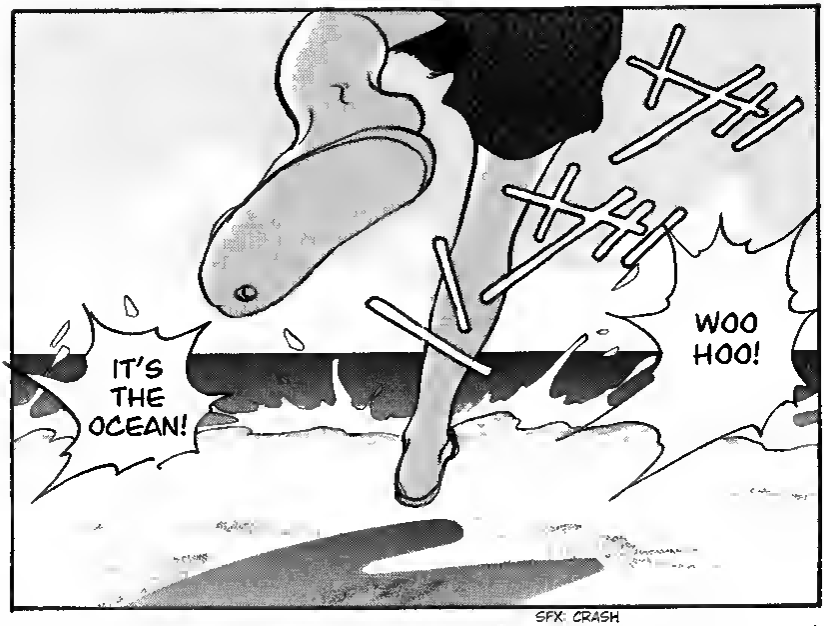

DAD.
YEAH?

IF YOU TAKE ONE STEP FORWARD, THE CHANCE GETS A MILLION TIMES BETTER.

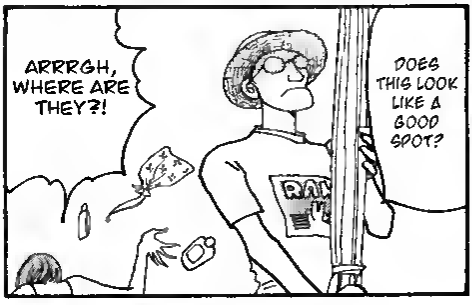

DAD? WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING...
NOTHING AT ALL.

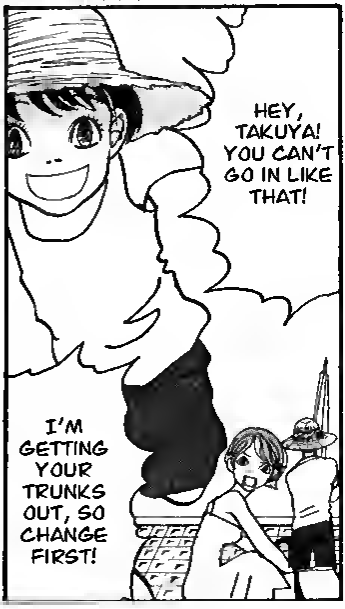
NO PROBLEM.
YES.
SHIMA SHOWED UP AGAIN AT SOME POINT.
SFX: CREAK
I'M VERY GRATEFUL FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.
YES, I'LL DO MY BEST.
I WONDER WHY?
HAS ANYTHING CHANGED SINCE SHE DISAPPEARED?
NO...
I DON'T THINK ANYTHING'S CHANGED

THE THREE OF US... ARE EXACTLY HOW WE ALWAYS WERE.
SHUT
Yaaaaa
I DON'T KNOW WHERE SHE PICKED IT UP, BUT THESE DAYS SHIMA WILL ONLY EAT THIS BRAND.
OH? LET ME SEE IT?
I TOOK THAT STEP FORWARD, AND KNOCKED THE ODDS DOWN...
FROM ONE IN A HUNDRED MILLION TO ONE IN A HUNDRED.

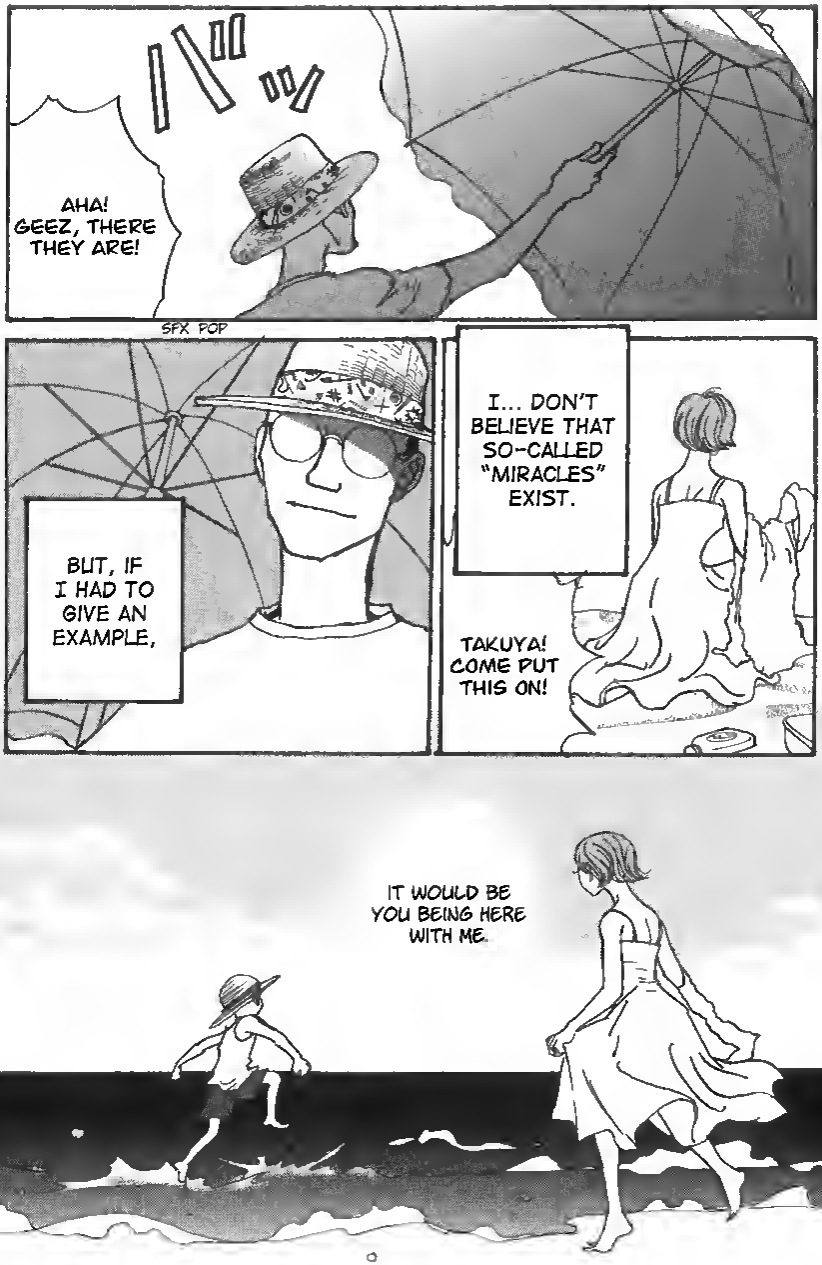

IT'S THE OCEAN!
WOO HOO!

SFX: CRASH

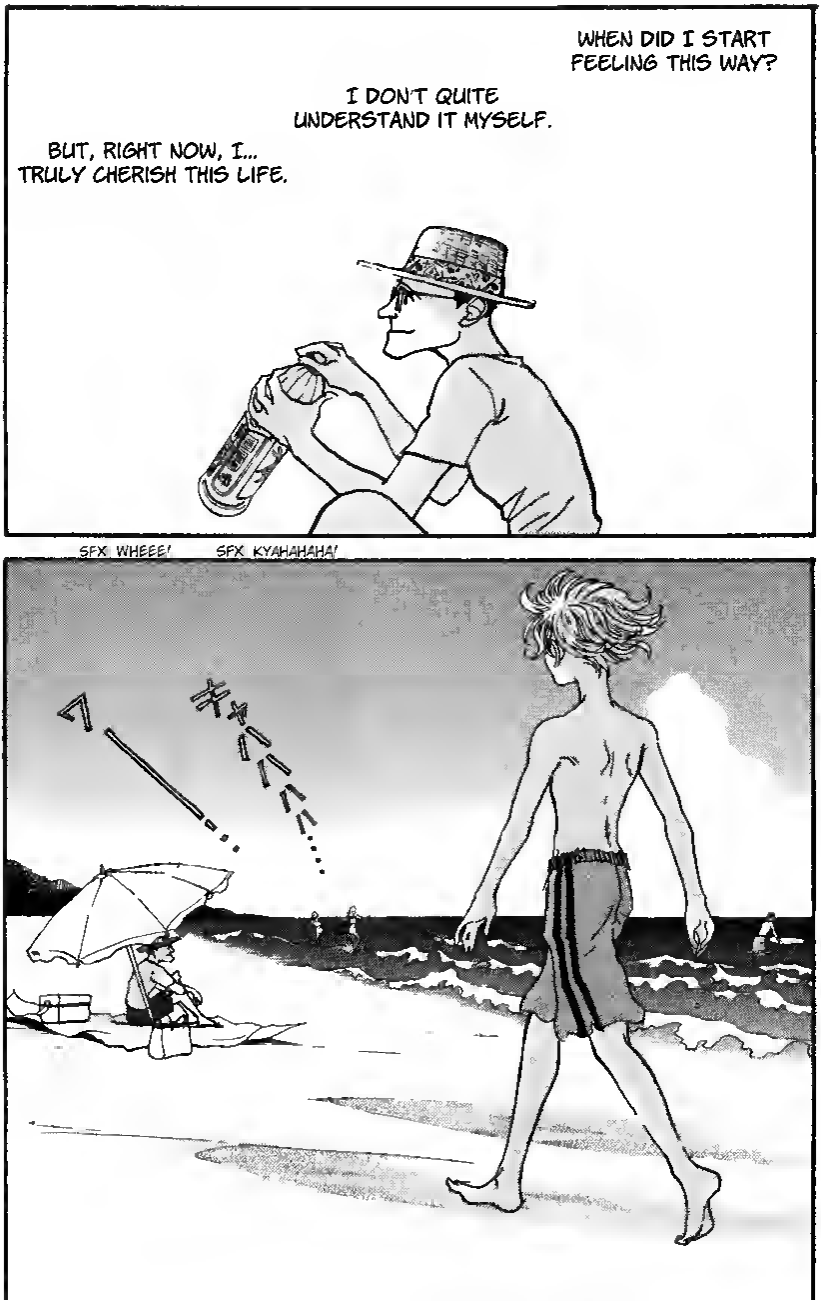

ARRRGH, WHERE ARE THEY?!
DOES THIS LOOK LIKE A GOOD SPOT?


HEY, TAKUYA! YOU CAN'T GO IN LIKE THAT!
I'M GETTING YOUR TRUNKS OUT, SO CHANGE FIRST!

HONEY, ARE THEY IN YOUR BAG?
LOOK INSIDE


AHA! GEEZ, THERE THEY ARE!
SFX POP
BUT, IF I HAD TO GIVE AN EXAMPLE,
I... DON'T BELIEVE THAT SO-CALLED "MIRACLES" EXIST.
TAKUYA! COME PUT THIS ON!
IT WOULD BE YOU BEING HERE WITH ME.

AND HOW WE CAME TOGETHER AGAIN.
AND HOW WE SEPARATED...
HOW WE FIRST MET,
THERE'S NO MIRACLE QUITE LIKE

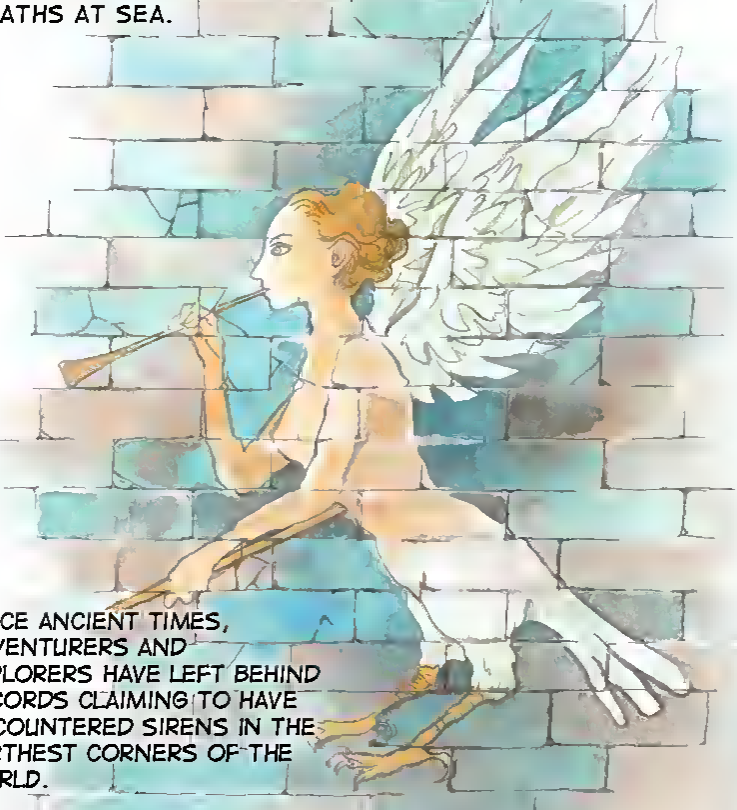

WHEN DID I START FEELING THIS WAY?
I DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF.
BUT, RIGHT NOW, I... TRULY CHERISH THIS LIFE.
SFX WHEEE!
SFX KYAHAHAHA!

HEY, NOW!

TL NOTE:
THE FAMILY NAME, SUETSUGU (末次), IS MADE OF THE CHARACTER FOR END, AS IN THE END OF THAT CHAIN OF MIRACLES, AND NEXT, AS IN THE NEXT STEP FORWARD. THE DAD'S STANDING EXACTLY AT THE PRESENT, "IN THE SPACE BETWEEN THE DISTANT PAST AND THE DISTANT FUTURE", WHERE YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE TO TAKE THAT STEP. HOW MUCH OF HIS LIFE IS HISTORY/FATE/GENETICS AND HOW MUCH IS HIS AGENCY?

SFX: CRASSSHHHH

THE SIREN:
A MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURE, HALF WOMAN AND HALF BIRD,* POSSESSING A BEAUTIFUL VOICE.
ACCORDING TO LEGEND, SAILORS WHO HEAR THE SIREN'S SONG ARE LURED TO THEIR DEATHS AT SEA.



SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, ADVENTURERS AND EXPLORERS HAVE LEFT BEHIND RECORDS CLAIMING TO HAVE ENCOUNTERED SIRENS IN THE FARTHEST CORNERS OF THE WORLD.

FUSHIGI NA SHOUNEN
BY YAMASHITA KAZUMI
- A VILLAGE IDIOT SCANLATION -

【Chapter 9】

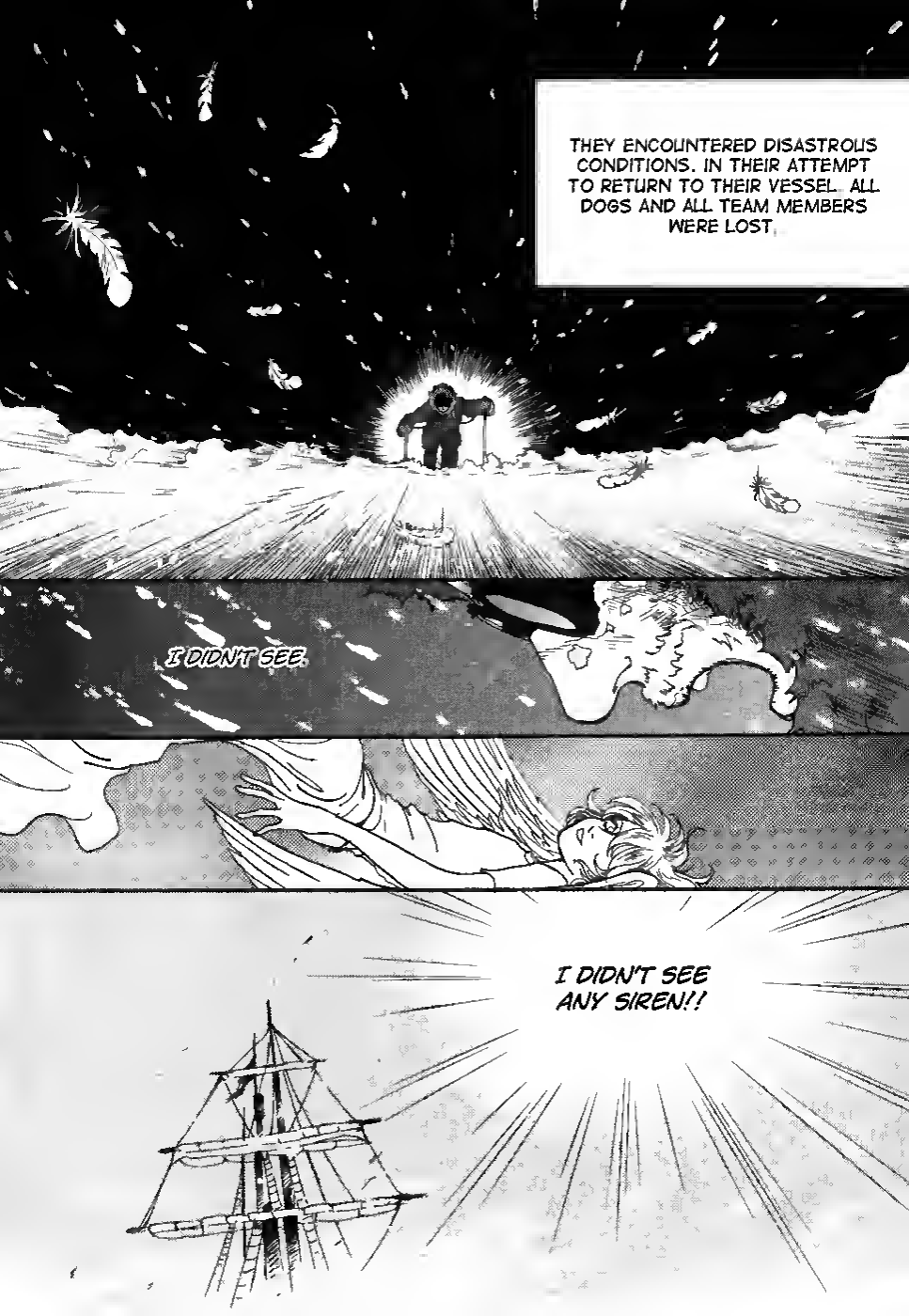
Sir Richard Wilson and Graham Becker

TRANSLATOR: TAYLOR | CLEANER: GAASHI
PROOFER: KELPTHEGREAT | TYPESETTER: CHIE
QUALITY CHECKER: HELELEO

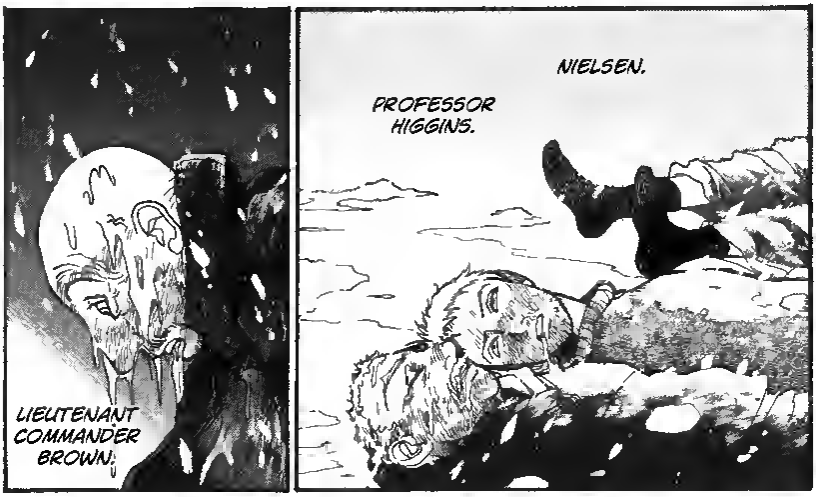
ERIC!!
SFX GASP
!or
WE'VE COME THIS FAR TOGETHER!! WE'RE NEARLY THERE!
FORGET IT
LEAVE ME HERE.
JUST NOW,
I SAW..
STOP IT! HOW CAN YOU GIVE UP NOW?
THIS WAY.. I CAN JOIN EVERYONE ON THE OTHER SIDE

A SIREN SITTING ON AN ICE-BERG...
THAT MUST MEAN... I'M ALREADY DONE FOR.
GODDAMN IT!

SIR RICHARD WILSON, NOBLE AND ADVENTURER, LED A TEAM OF 27 RESEARCHERS, SAILORS, AND CREW TO ANTARCTICA, MAKING LANDFALL ON THE PALMER LAND PENINSULA IN 19XX.
FROM THERE, A GROUP OF SEVEN CONTINUED BY DOGSLED IN A BID FOR THE SOUTH POLE.


THEY ENCOUNTERED DISASTROUS CONDITIONS. IN THEIR ATTEMPT TO RETURN TO THEIR VESSEL. ALL DOGS AND ALL TEAM MEMBERS WERE LOST.
I DIDN'T SEE.
I DIDN'T SEE ANY SIREN!!

SFX: GRATE
ガバーン
HEY,
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

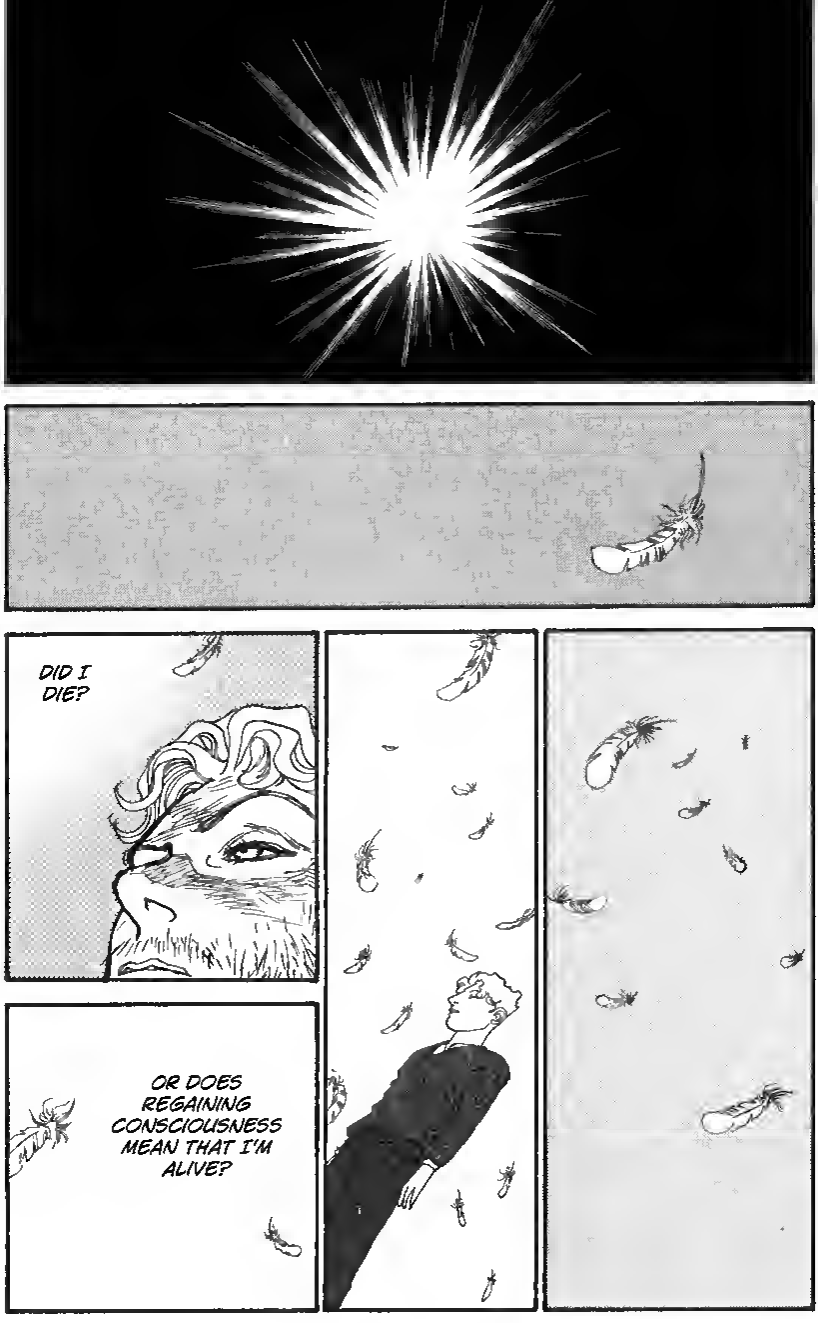

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER BROWN.
PROFESSOR HIGGINS.
NIELSEN.

WHAT HAPPENED?

I'M ASKING YOU, WHAT HAP-PENED?!
THE REST WOULDN'T LISTEN TO ME. THEY'RE TRYIN' TO MAKE FOR CAPE HORN IN THE LIFEBOAT.
THE SHIP GOT THROWN UP ON TO THE ICE WHEN THE SEAS GOT ROUGH.
YOU MEAN TO SAY THAT THE ENTIRE CREW HAS ABANDONED THE FRONTIER?
DIDN'T THE FRONTIER ABANDON US?
THE FRON-TIER?

SFX: CREEEEAK
THIS IS THE END OF THE FRONTIER
THE PENGUINS ARE SAYING GOODBYE
THE FRONTIER..
SFX: CAW, CRAAAAWK
WE UNDER-ESTIMATED THE WINTERS DOWN HERE.
IS TRAPPED IN THE ICE.
CRACKLE
CRACK

SFX: CREAK CREAK CREAK
SFX: GRIND GRIND
SFX: SCREEEAH


DID I DIE?
OR DOES REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS MEAN THAT I'M ALIVE?

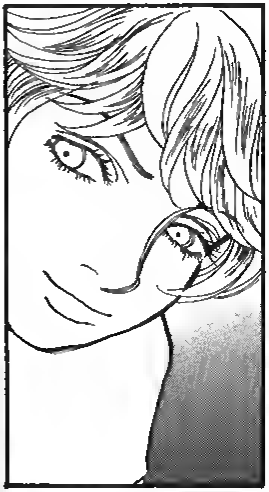
AM I.. DEAD...?
I WANT TO LIVE
..NO..
DO YOU WISH TO DIE?
THE DEAD ARE DEAD.
HOW COULD YOU LET THEM DOWN?
EVERY ONE OF THE MEN WHO'VE COME THIS FAR WITH ME IS DEAD..
I CAN'T LET THEM DOWN.
WHY DO YOU WANT TO LIVE?

YOU BEING ABLE TO SEE ME
MEANS THAT YOUR FATE IS TO DIE
I'LL BE THE FIRST MAN TO SEE YOU AND LIVE
I WON'T GIVE UP

IF YOU CAN OVER-COME YOUR OWN SELF, THAT IS
I SEE.
PERHAPS YOU'LL BE ABLE TO CHANGE YOUR FATE...

YOU'LL SEE..
I WILL.

JUST HOW WILL YOU MASTER YOURSELF?
PUT ON A SHOW FOR ME.
I LOOK FOR-WARD TO IT.



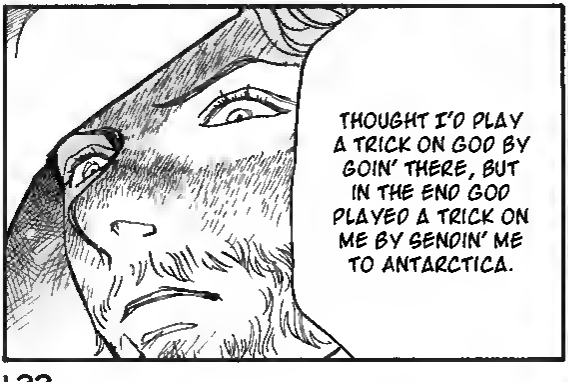
I WON'T DIE!!
I'M NOT GOING TO DIE.

SFX: BOOM
WHAT... WAS THAT SCENE...!?
I JUST COOKED UP SOME NICE HOT SOUP.
IT'S BEEN FOUR DAYS.
SO YER FINALLY AWAKE.

WHAT IS.. YOUR NAME?
.. CAN I ASK YOU ONE THING?

I STOWED AWAY ON THIS SHIP THINKIN' TO MAKE FOR AMERICA.
ME NAME'S GRAHAM BECKER

... STILL I DON'T EXPECT YOU'D KNOW ME IF YOU HEARD IT
OH. I HAVEN'T INTRODUCED MESELF YET...?


THOUGHT I'D PLAY A TRICK ON GOD BY GOIN' THERE, BUT IN THE END GOD PLAYED A TRICK ON ME BY SENDIN' ME TO ANTARCTICA.

...I SEE...
CAPTAIN WILSON, WE CAUGHT A STOW-AWAY!
WHAT DO WE DO WITH HIM?!
WE CAN'T EXACTLY THROW HIM INTO THE SEA NOW, CAN WE?
A LITTLE, HMM?
KNOW A LITTLE CARPEN-TRY
THAT MAN... SO HIS NAME WAS BECKER...
THE MEN ON THIS SHIP ARE EITHER RE-SEARCHERS OR NAVY MEN.
DO YOU HAVE ANY SKILLS?

OH, SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE...
SFX: STAB
.....

YER FOOT WAS STARTIN' TO ROT FROM THE FROSTBITE, SO I TOOK IT OFF

FIELD SURGERY IS THE SAME AS CARPENTRY, HE SAYS, SO HE TAUGHT ME.
DON'T WORRY, I WATCHED DR. JAMES DO IT BEFORE HE DIED.
TOOK 'EM OUTTA THE SHIP BEFORE SHE WENT DOWN.
WE'VE GOT TOOLS AND MORPHINE

I KNOW A GUY THAT LOST HIS WHOLE LEG IN THE WAR.
MADE HIS WAY BEST HE COULD WITH A WOODEN LEG.
DOIN' JUST FINE WITH HIS LADY, TOO.
WELL, HE'S EASIER TA KEEP TRACK OF NOW, HEE HEE HEE.
EVEN THE WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT THAT COME OUT OF THIS VULGAR MAN SOUND DIRTY.
I DOUBT HE'S SEEN THE SIREN.

COULD THAT MEAN THAT WHILE I'M MEANT TO DIE, HE'S MEANT TO LIVE?
SFX: WHOOOSH

SFX BOOM
SFX BOOM
SFX PANT PANT PANT
SFX BAM BAM BAM
THAT DREAM AGAIN.
はあ
はあ
はあ
AAAH!

ON TOP OF MY EXHAUSTION, MY AMPUTATED FOOT GOT INFECTED AND A HIGH FEVER SET IN.
IT WAS A PLACE I'D SEEN... BUT WHERE? I CAN'T REMEMBER.
YER UP?
.....
GOTTA EAT SOME-THIN', OR YOU WON'T HAVE ANY STRENGTH

SFX: FLOP
I HEARD IF YOU EAT THIS, YOU WON'T GET THE GANGRENE.
SEAL MEAT.
HMM?
THIS?
SFX: LEER
I'VE BEEN EATING IT TOO, NO PROBLEM.
SFX: GAG

ALL SFX: BOOM BOOM BOOM

SFX: STARTLE
はっ
HOW ARE YOU DOING?
I SOUND SO WEAK.
I-I'M FINE.

IS THAT SO?
IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS, STAYING ALIVE IS HARDLY STRESSFUL.
COMPARED TO HAVING TO GIVE UP ON THE SOUTH POLE AND LOSING ALL MY COMPANIONS.. THIS IS NOTHING.
SHOULDN'T YOU SAY THAT YOU LEFT THEM BEHIND?
RATHER THAN "LOSING" YOUR COMPANIONS,
BRINGING THEM BACK WITH YOU COULD ALSO HAVE BEEN AN OPTION.
THOSE WHO BECAME ILL,
AND THOSE WHO WERE INJURED.

HEY, GOLDI-LOCKS.
SEE YA LATER

SFX: BOOM
SFX: THUNK
PA—!!

WHAT IS IT?
DID YOU REMEMBER SOME-THING?
!?
AM I.. DEAD..?
SFX RISE
ぶわっ
AM I DEAD AFTER ALL?!

WAH!

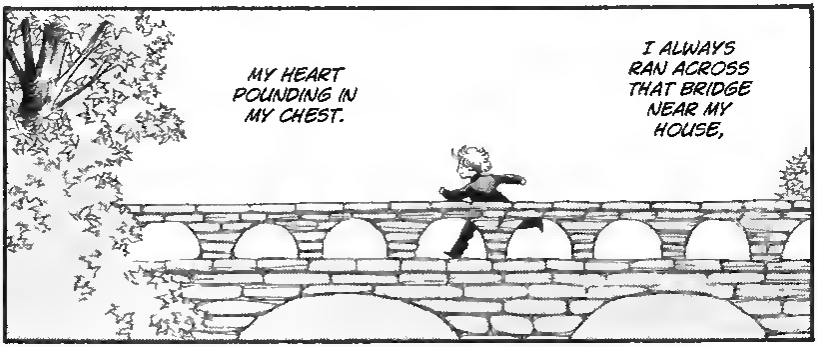
WHAT'S GOING ON..?!
WH..
SFX STARTLE
SFX STUFF STUFF
SFX BOOM
THE ICE WE'RE SITTIN' ON IS STARTIN' TO CRACK.
WE'RE HEADIN' OUT.
CRE-E-EAK

SFX: WHISTLE
SFX: RUMBLE
ウウ...

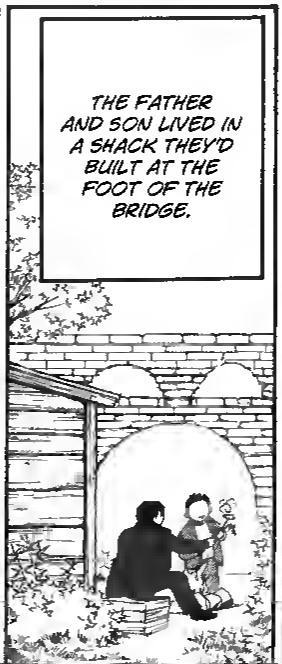
IS THE ICE BREAKING AWAY?
THAT SOUND-
I MUSTN'T LET THE PAIN GET TO ME
URGH!

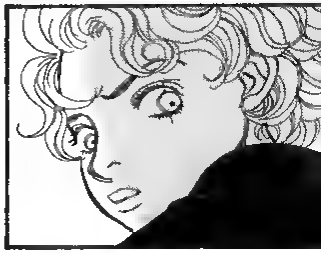
YER USE-LESS WITH THAT LEG, SO GET IN
PUT THE SLED RUNNERS ON 'ER AND SHE RUNS RIGHT OVER THE SNOW
I MADE THIS BOAT.
I'LL BE FINE AS LONG AS I HAVE A SKI AND STOCKS.
I REMEMBER
AFTER TRYING SO HARD TO FORGET FOR THE PAST 23 YEARS,
I'D REALLY MANAGED TO FORGET...
SUIT YER-SELF.

BECKER BEARS A PERFECT RESEMBLANCE TO THE FATHER AND SON FROM BACK THEN.

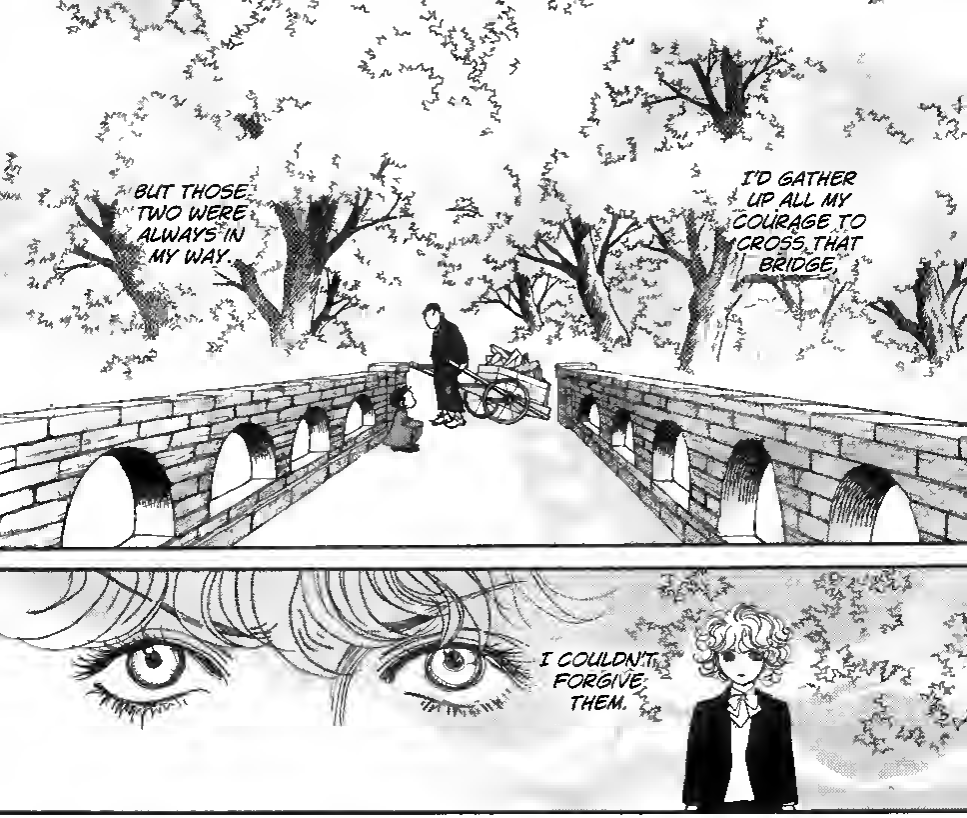

MY HEART POUNDING IN MY CHEST.
I ALWAYS RAN ACROSS THAT BRIDGE NEAR MY HOUSE,

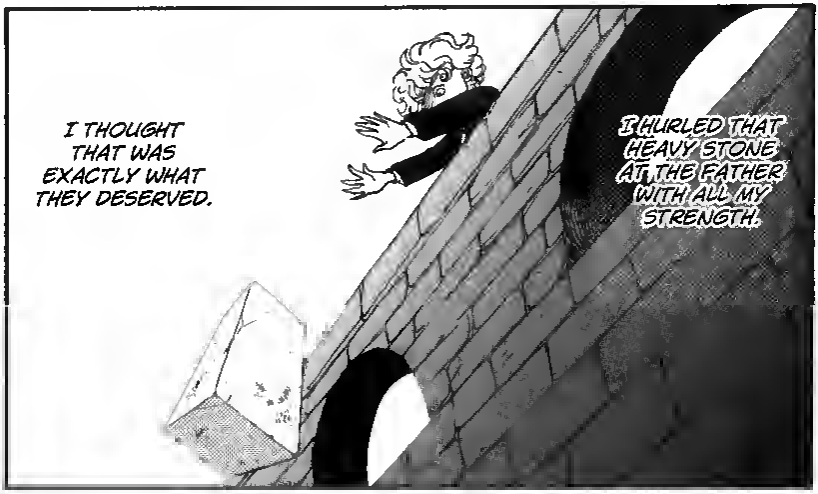
EVERYONE IN TOWN DISLIKED THEM.
I HATED THEM TOO.


THE FATHER AND SON LIVED IN A SHACK THEY'D BUILT AT THE FOOT OF THE BRIDGE.



GET OUT, AND DON'T COME BACK!!
THEY STOLE THE TOWNSPEOPLE'S VEGETABLES AND THINGS, AND SKULKED AROUND IN OUR PUBS.
THAT'S RIGHT, I REMEMBER, LITTLE BY LITTLE.
Get back here!
WHAT'RE YA STARIN' AT!!
SHITTY BRATS!!
BECKER LOOKS EXACTLY
LIKE THAT MONSTROUS MAN!!


BUT THOSE TWO WERE ALWAYS IN MY WAY.
I'D GATHER UP ALL MY COURAGE TO CROSS THAT BRIDGE,
I COULDN'T FORGIVE THEM.


I THOUGHT THAT WAS EXACTLY WHAT THEY DESERVED.
I HURLED THAT HEAVY STONE AT THE FATHER WITH ALL MY STRENGTH.

THAT BOY WOULD BE ABOUT MY OWN AGE NOW...
SFX: HUFF HUFF
はあ
はあ
... NO... IT COULD BE A COINCIDENTAL RESEMBLANCE.
SFX: SURPRISE
ピク
ぬ!

WATCHING HIS FATHER DIE MUST HAVE CUT AN INDELIBLE WOUND INTO THAT BOY'S HEART.
IS IT REALLY MERE COINCI-DENCE ..?!
HE COULD EVEN HAVE NURSED HIS RESENTMENT AND WAITED FOR ANY OPPORTUNITY TO BOARD MY SHIP.
HE COULDN'T HAVE FOR-GOTTEN, THE WAY I DID.
HIS FATHER WAS KILLED IN FRONT OF HIM.

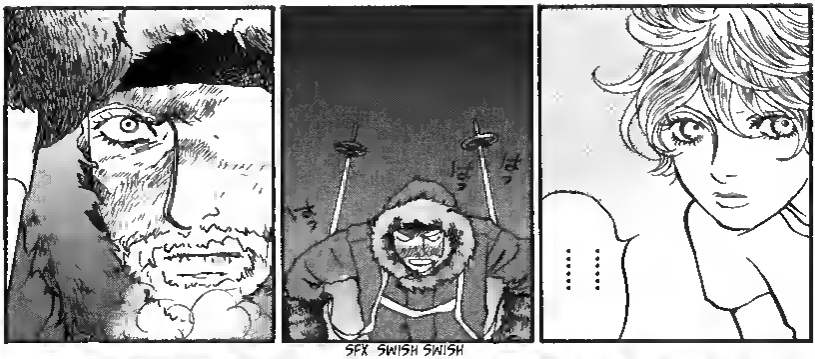
IF IT WERE ME,
I'D SPEND MY WHOLE LIFE SEARCHING FOR THE ONE WHO DID IT
AND KILL HIM.
YES, THAT MUST BE IT.
HE WATCHES ME EVEN WHILE HIS BACK IS TURNED.

THIS IS
A LAWLESS LAND,
THE PERFECT PLACE
FOR REVENGE.

WILL HE KILL ME,
OR I HIM?

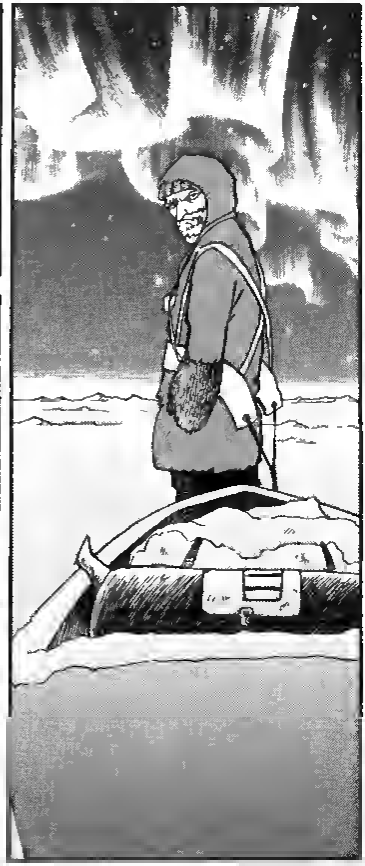
THERE YOU ARE,
SIREN.
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

YES,
FOR YOU
FOR ME?
WHY WERE YOU WAITING FOR ME?
WHY...?
I WONDER...



SFX SWISH SWISH

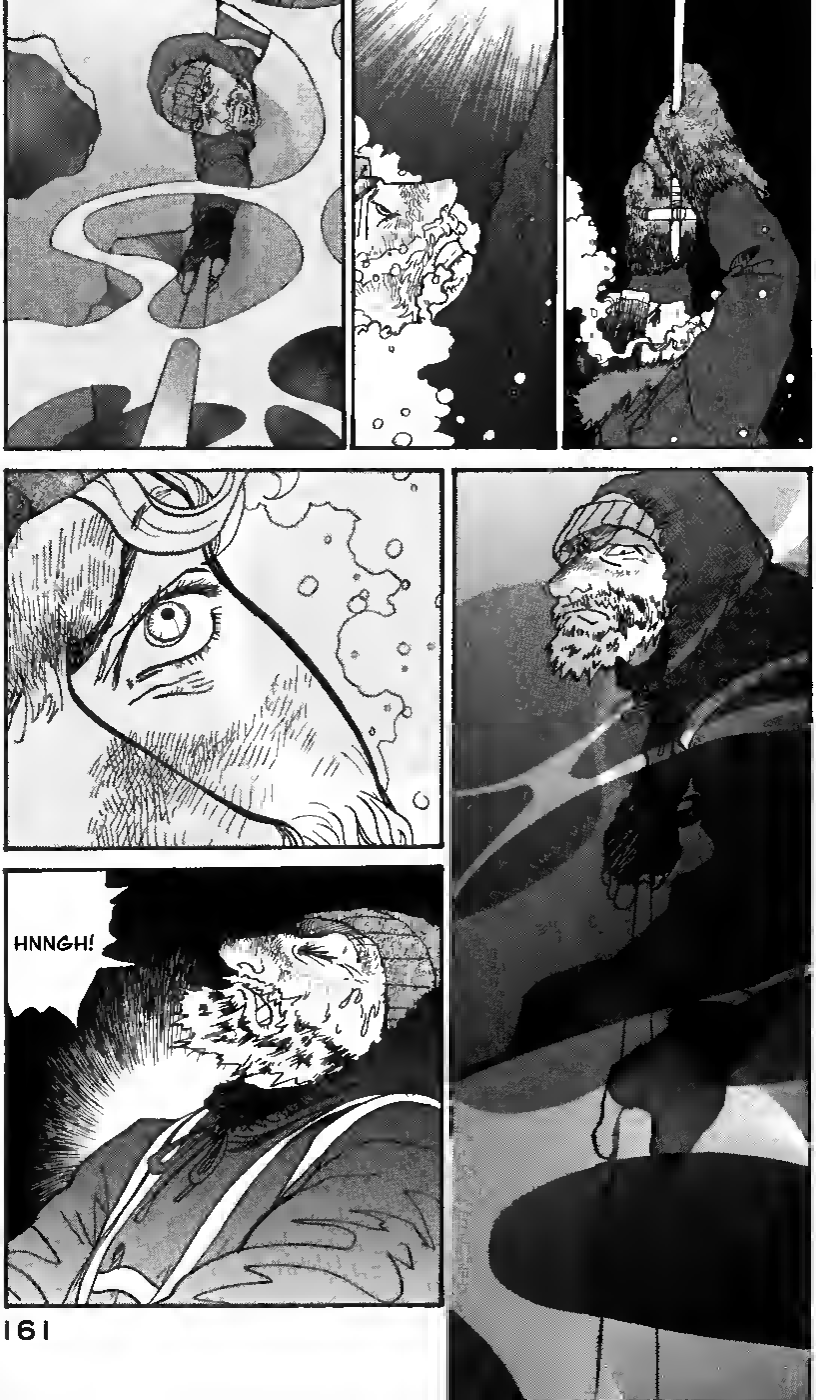
SFX CLICK

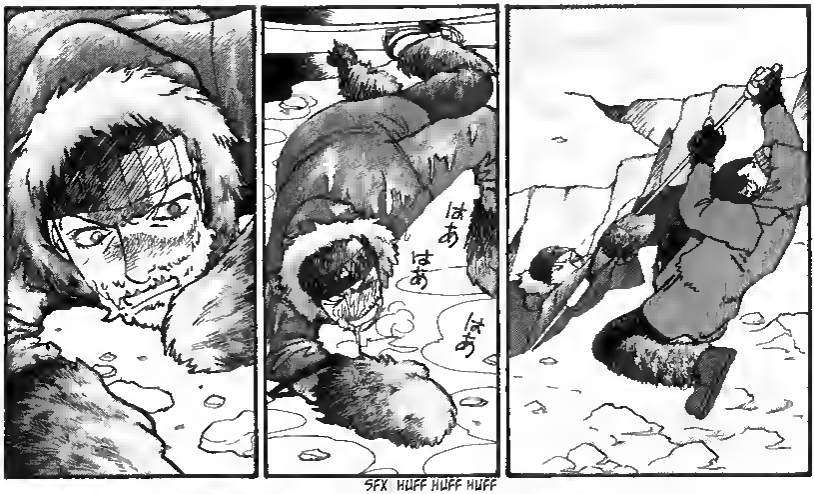


HEY!! DON'T GO ANY FURTHER LEFT!
HUH?
THERE'S A CRE-VASSE!!
SFX SPLASH
SFX LURCH
AH!

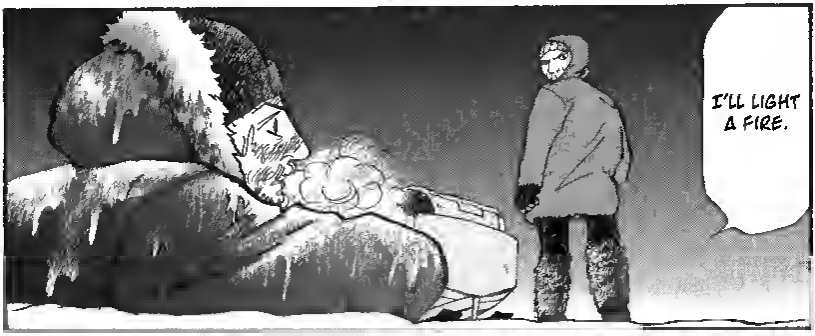
WHAT KIND OF A JOKE IS THIS?
I GO AND GET MYSELF KILLED BECAUSE I'M PREOCCUPIED THAT SOMEONE'S GOING TO KILL ME?
THE SIREN IS LAUGHING.

GODDAMN IT.
AM I GOING TO DIE HERE?


HNNGH!



SFX HUFF HUFF HUFF



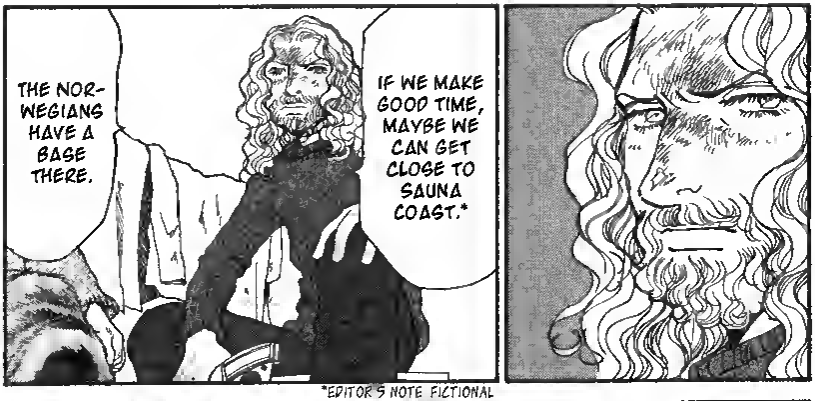
AM I OVER-THINKING IT?
NO... EVEN IF BECKER ISN'T THE BOY FROM BACK THEN, I STILL...
WILL THE CULPRIT STEP FORWARD!!
I SHOULD EXPECT ANYONE WHO'S EVER HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE SEA TO UNDERSTAND JUST HOW CRUCIAL DRINKING WATER IS ON LONG VOYAGES!
SFX SILENCE
SOMEONE HERE HAS USED OUR DRINKING WATER TO WASH THEIR CLOTHES.

SFX: TAP
YOU WERE HERE AT NOON, WEREN'T YOU?
IT WAS YOU. YOU WERE SEEN.
MY ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION, ON WHICH THE HOPES OF THE BRITISH PEOPLE REST, IS A MOST SELECT BAND OF BRAVE MEN.
PLUS ONE.
UNDER-STAND?

I SAID TO CLEAN EVERY SINGLE NOOK AND CRANNY, DIDN'T I?
SFX GRIND
IF HE ISN'T THAT BOY, HE STILL HAS AMPLE CAUSE TO BEAR ME ILL WILL.
I SCORNED HIM.
WARM YA RIGHT UP.
HAVE SOME HOT CHOCO-LATE

AM I OVERTHINKING IT...?
- IT'S WARM.

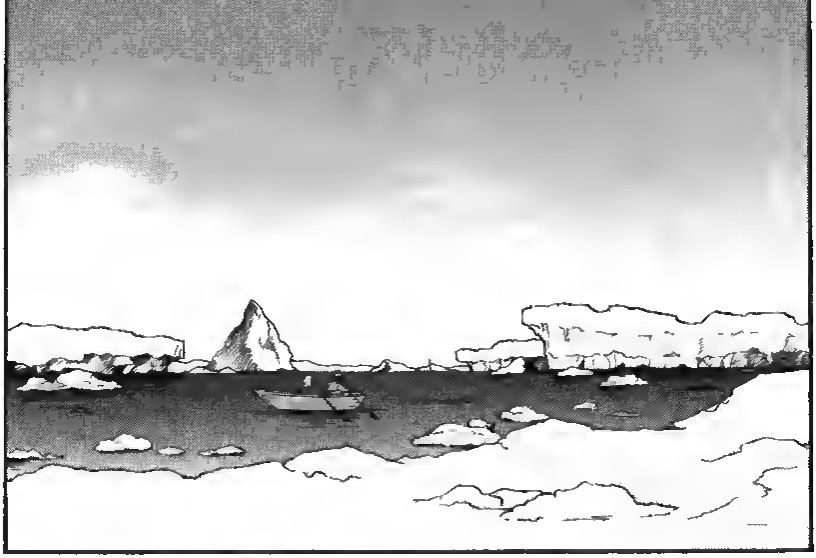
SFX: CHOMP
HALF A YEAR LATER.
SFX: CHEW CHEW CHEW
OUR ICE FLOE'S BEEN SHIFTING NORTHWARD THIS PAST MONTH.
LOOKS LIKE
TILL IT GETS DANGEROUS 'CAUSE THE ICE STARTS BREAKING UNDER OUR FEET
JUST A MATTER OF TIME...

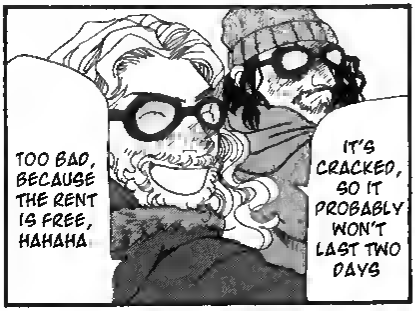


*EDITOR'S NOTE FICTIONAL

SFX. FLAP

TO THE
NORTH.




TOO BAD, BECAUSE THE RENT IS FREE, HAHAHA
IT'S CRACKED, SO IT PROBABLY WON'T LAST TWO DAYS

HOW ABOUT THAT ONE?

WE'RE USED TO RAW MEAT BY NOW ANYWAY.
WE'RE OVER OUR WEIGHT LIMIT.
S'A PITY, BUT LET'S DUMP THE STOVE NEXT TIME WE STOP.

OUR POSSESSIONS STEADILY DWINDLE AS WE MOVE FROM ICE FLOE TO ICE FLOE.
WHAT'D YOU THROW AWAY TODAY?
ME?
GOT ME A SEAL SKIN
SO I TOSSED ME STINKY OLD BLANKET.
I THREW AWAY OUR UNION JACK.
HEH, I NEVER HAD ANYTHING FROM THE BEGINNING.
AS LONG AS A MAN WILLS IT, HE CAN TRAVEL AS LIGHT AS HE WANTS
YOU'RE RIGHT
HAHA

I DIDN'T SEE THE SIREN AFTER THAT...
I REALIZED THAT FROM TIME TO TIME
I WOULD FACE THE SKY WITH MY ARMS OPEN
I WONDER WHY?
WANTING TO EMBRACE HIM,
THE SIREN.

SFX SPLASH
SFX WHOOOSH
WE WON'T MAKE IT TO LAND! ANY PACK ICE AROUND?
IT'S NO GOOD, I CAN'T SEE!

WAH!
DO IT!
GOTTA BAIL IT OUT FAST ...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WATER GOT IN.
WE'LL HIT ICE!
TO THE LEFT, TO THE LEFT!

SFX: BUBBLE
ボコッ
THERE MUST BE A CRACK ON THE BOTTOM OF THE BOAT SOMEWHERE.
WATER'S STARTING TO LEAK IN.
WITH THE TWO OF US ABOARD...?!
CAN THIS BOAT HOLD UP
.....
.....
HUH?

CAPTAIN, WHAT'RE YA KEEPIN' 'TILL THE END?
TILL THE END...?!
SO CARE-FREE, AT A TIME LIKE THIS.
IT'S THIS.
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT I'M HOLDING ON TO...
THAT'S RIGHT.
AH.

WE'LL BE HEROES, YOU AND I!!
IT'S MY DIARY. I WRAPPED IT UP IN SEALSKIN SO IT WON'T GET WET.
WHEN WE GET HOME, I'LL PUBLISH IT.
IT'S NO GOOD.
THIS BOAT WON'T HOLD UP AFTER ALL.

WHICH OF US SHOULD BE THE ONE TO REMAIN IN MEMORY OF ALL THE COMRADES WHO FELL IN THE COURSE OF OUR QUEST FOR THE SOUTH POLE?
IF ONLY ONE OF US CAN COME OUT ALIVE...
FURTHERMORE, ISN'T HE...
NOT BECKER.

THAT BOY FROM UNDER THE BRIDGE...?!
THAT'S RIGHT... HE'S THE CHILD FROM BACK THEN...!!
HE WANTS TO KILL ME, SO IT'S ALL RIGHT IF I KILL HIM FIRST.

NOW IT'S MY TURN TO ASK.
BECKER, WHAT WOULD YOU HOLD ON TO UNTIL THE VERY END!?
I GOT NOTHIN' TO HOLD ON TO!
LET ME GUESS.
.....

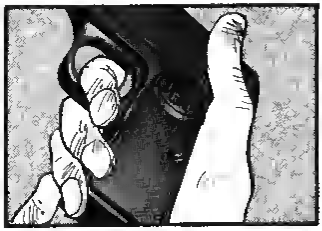
THIS CROSS?!
I PICKED IT UP SOMEWHERE.
I BET IT'S A MEMENTO OF YOUR DEAD FATHER!!
THE CRUCIFIX YOU'RE WEARING AROUND YOUR NECK!!
HE'S PAST 80 NOW, BUT SPRY AS ANYBODY.
ALSO, YA CAN'T JUST GO 'ROUND KILLIN' OFF SOMEONE'S OLD PA!

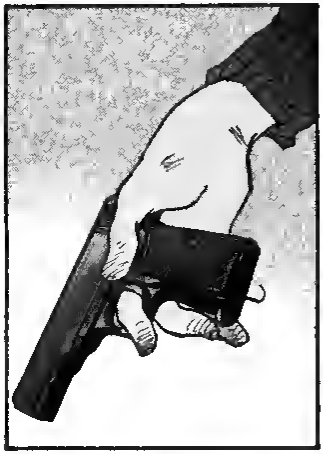
DIDJA GET ME MIXED UP WITH SOME-BODY?!
I WAS OVERTHINKING THINGS AFTER ALL?!
BECAUSE ALL THE STRESS AND SUFFERING AT THE SOUTH POLE TURNED MY HEAD FUNNY?!
DID I BELIEVE SUCH A THING

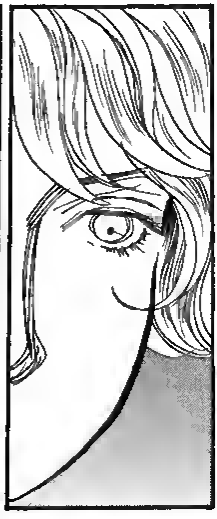
HE IS THE CHILD FROM THAT TIME!!

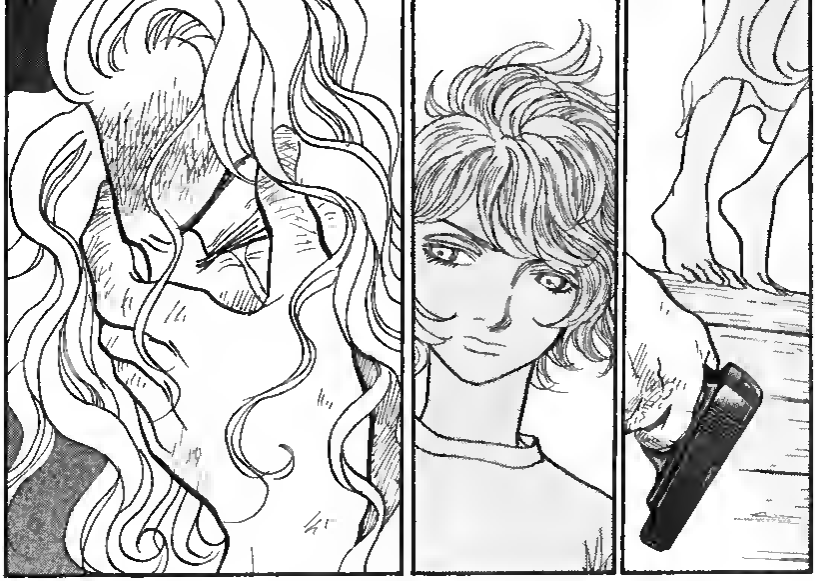
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SAVE UNTIL THE VERY END?!
I WILL KILL HIM, AND I WILL REMAIN ALIVE.
LET ME ASK YOU AGAIN.

IF I HAD TO SAY, THEN
WELL,
YOU, CAPTAIN WILSON.

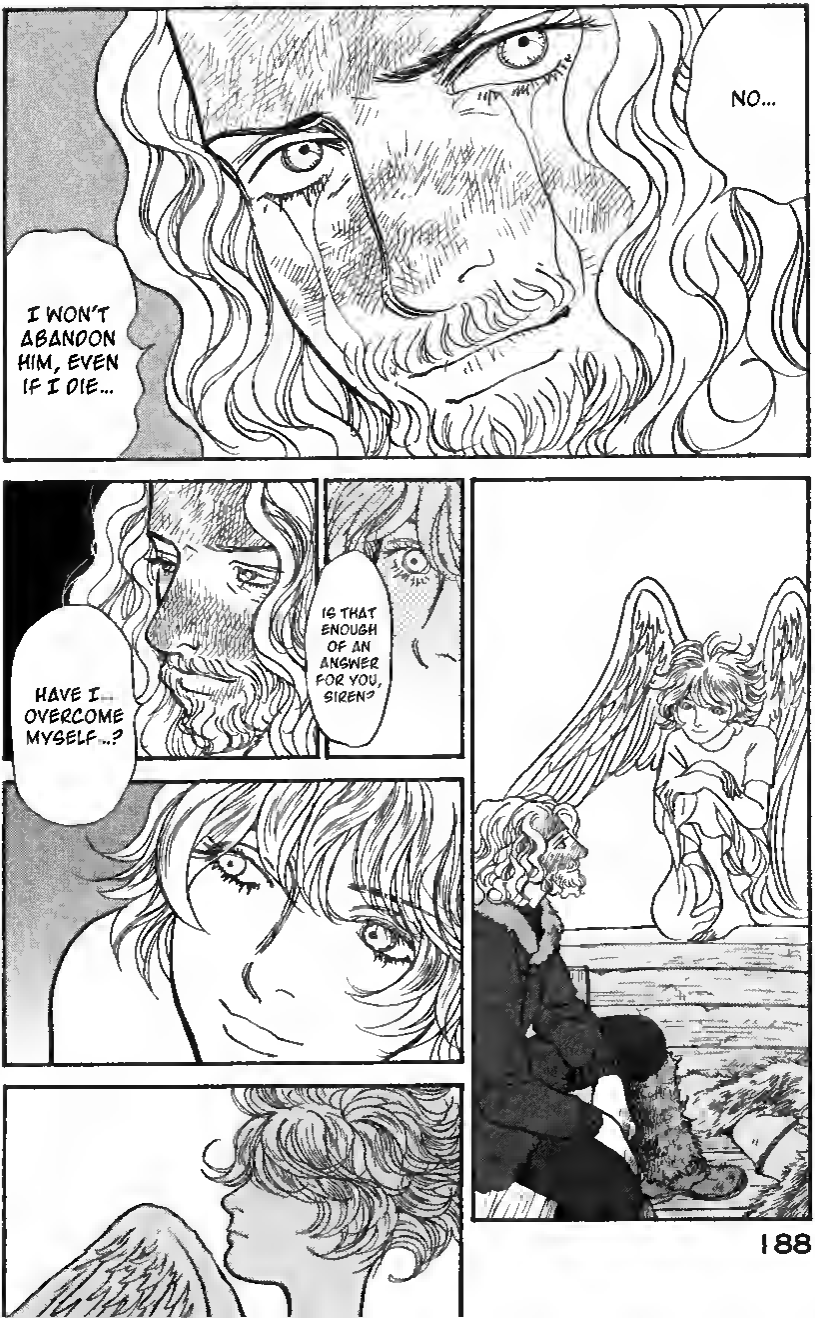


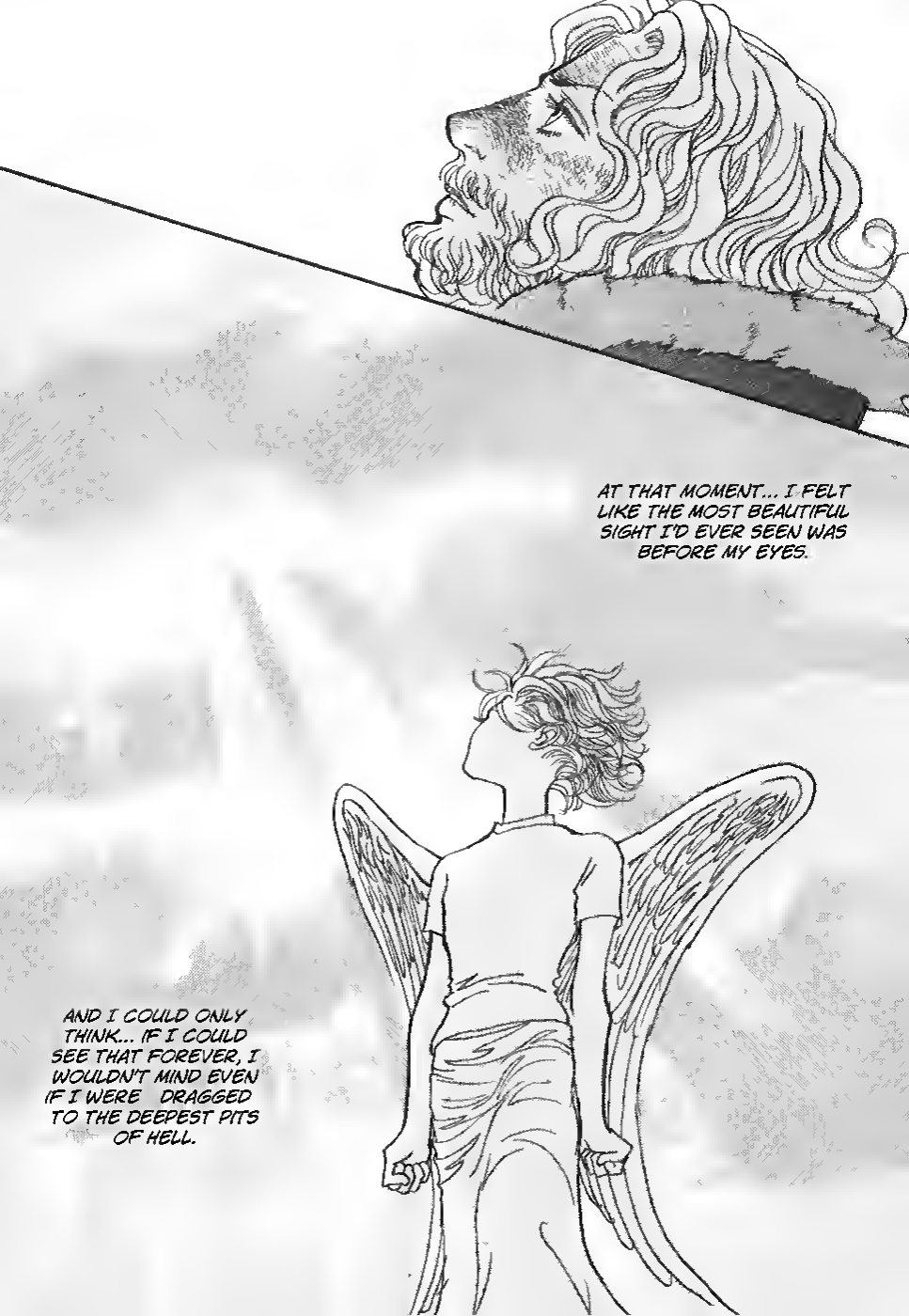






WILL YOU NOT ABANDON BECKER IN ORDER TO SURVIVE?
WILSON,


NO...
I WON'T ABANDON HIM, EVEN IF I DIE...
IS THAT ENOUGH OF AN ANSWER FOR YOU, SIREN?
HAVE I... OVERCOME MYSELF..?


AT THAT MOMENT... I FELT LIKE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SIGHT I'D EVER SEEN WAS BEFORE MY EYES.
AND I COULD ONLY THINK... IF I COULD SEE THAT FOREVER, I WOULDN'T MIND EVEN IF I WERE DRAGGED TO THE DEEPEST PITS OF HELL.

SFX SMOKE

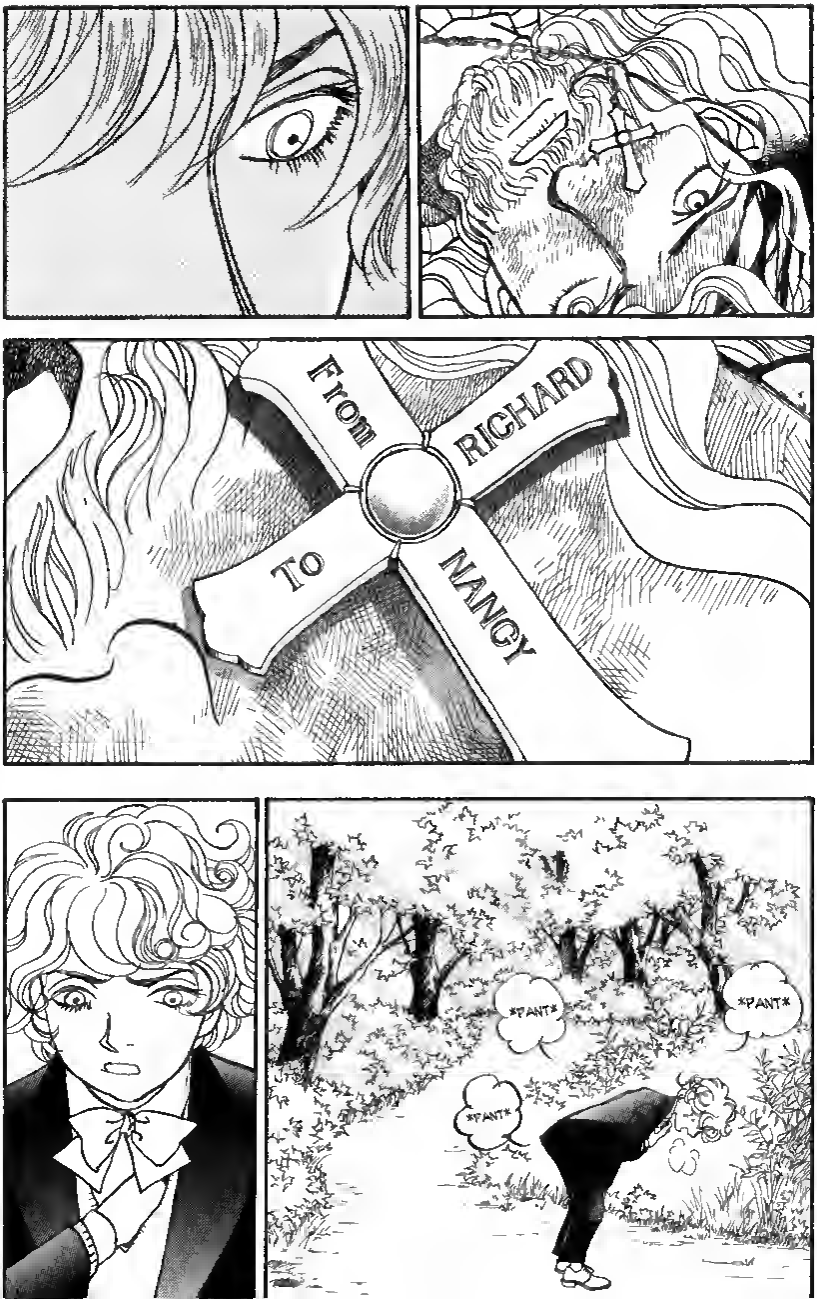
SFX: BERROOOOMMM
HEY! BECKER!
WAKE UP!!

SFX: BRRRRRROOOOOOMMMM
IT'S THE BRITISH FLAG!
YER RIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE SPOTTED US. THEY'RE SWINGIN' 'ROUND THIS WAY.

WILSON
GOOD-
BYE,

AH... WAIT A SECOND...
I REMEMBER.

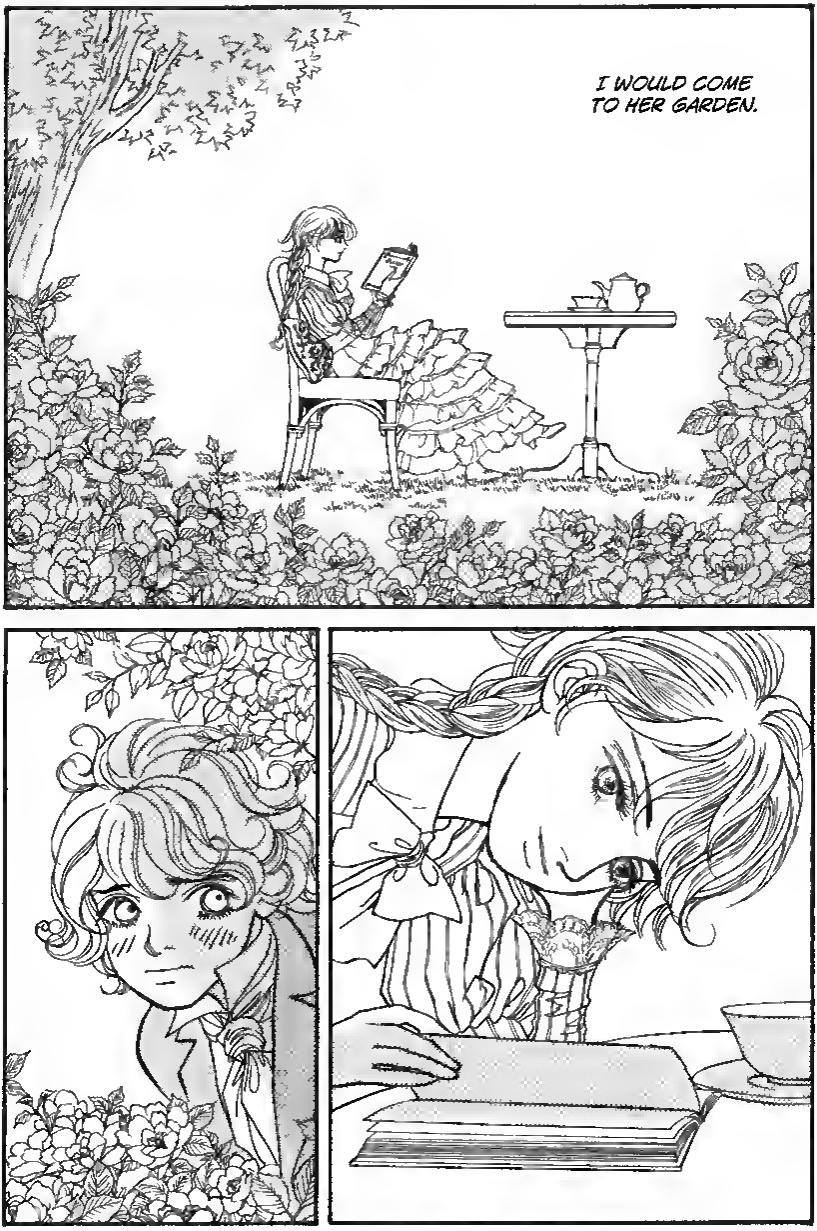
SFX WHUMF
SFX YANK


From
RICHARD
To
NANCY
PANT
PANT
PANT

WHAT SHOULD I DO? MOTHER WILL BE CROSS.
UH-OH... I DROPPED MY CRUCIFIX.
I HAVE TO RUN.
AHH, BOLLOCKS! I SHOULDN'T BE WORRYING ABOUT THAT NOW.

SFX: KA-LUSH

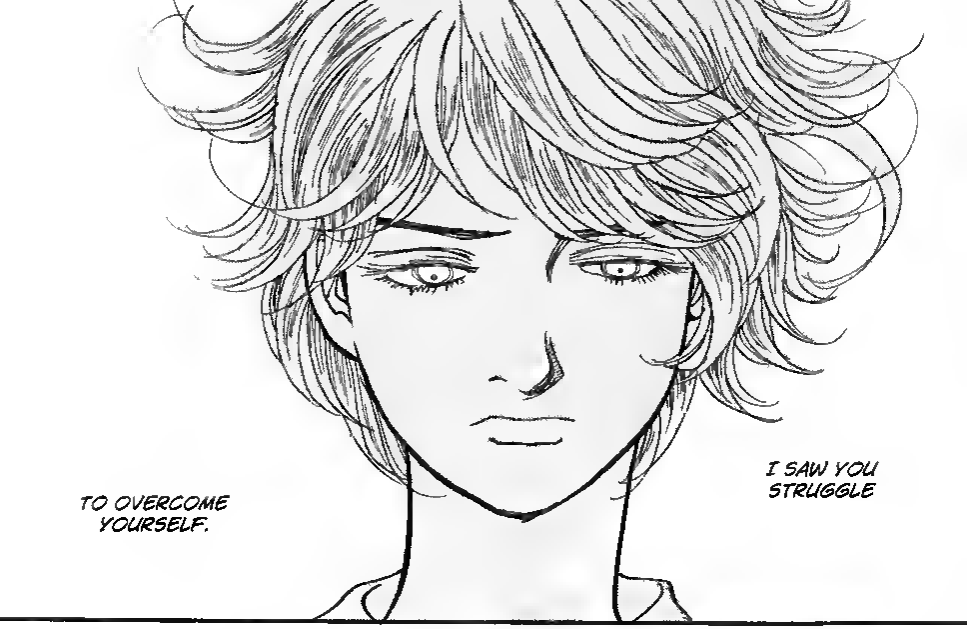
... I FINALLY REMEMBER
I NEVER LEFT MY HOME WITHOUT MAKING SURE I LOOKED MY VERY BEST.
OF COURSE, I NEVER FORGOT MY CROSS.
IF I CUT ACROSS THE FIELDS AND THE FOREST
AND CROSSED THE BRIDGE...


I WOULD COME
TO HER GARDEN.

SHE LOOKED LIKE YOU,
SIREN.
DESPITE ALL THOSE PAINS I TOOK TO LOOK MY BEST I WAS NEVER ABLE TO SPEAK TO HER
SO THAT'S WHY...
YOU WERE WAITING FOR ME, WILSON.

SILENTLY...
DEEPLY...
THESE FEELINGS KEPT IN THE DEPTHS OF PEOPLE'S HEARTS...
I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND
YOUR YEARNING
OR BECKER'S HATRED,

SOMETIMES, THOUGH...
PEOPLE CAN SHINE BRIGHTLY AND GO ON LIVING.
I WAS THERE, WILSON...


I SAW YOU STRUGGLE
TO OVERCOME YOURSELF.